

19. If you were able to stand the expense of setting up training-walls there that would minimize the amount of dredging required once the channel had been made?—That is so. No doubt in years to come they will have training-walls here.

20. It would mean you would have to do more dredging at shorter intervals?—Yes.

21. I think the dredge you suggest is somewhat larger than the Thomas King dredge used at New Plymouth?—Yes.

22. Has that dredge been a success?—It has been a wonderful success.

23. *Mr. Myers.*] When did you make your valuation of the wharf?—About two months ago.

24. Did you take into consideration that all the planking is new?—Yes. I will give you the basis of my report. I based it on this: that a new wharf could be built for £5,000—a better wharf than the present, and fit to carry railway-engines. We are doing similar work at Wanganui. Allowing for old timber and for the new timber which I looked upon as good—the full value—I deducted 30 per cent. off the value of a new wharf, and that is how I got at it.

25. Your valuation is simply a valuation of the mere structure as it stands at present?—Yes.

26. And, of course, does not in the least take in outside considerations?—No.

27. You say that this river is very similar to the Wanganui?—Yes.

28. At the bar in Wanganui have you any walls?—Yes; they go out to within 500 ft. of the bar.

29. And I suppose they were very costly to construct?—No, they were not; they were very cheap. We were very fortunate in having good material close at hand.

30. Can you give us any idea of the cost?—It averaged £10 per foot for 4,500 ft.

31. Were those walls considered necessary in Wanganui?—Yes.

32. If the conditions, then, are similar in the two rivers, why do you say walls will not be necessary in the Manawatu River?—Not necessary in the meantime, because they only want 2 ft. or 3 ft. more water here. We are after 30 ft. or more water.

33. May we take it they will be necessary if they want to bring bigger vessels up the river?—Yes, over a certain size.

34. Can you say what vessels, in your opinion, could be brought up the river with walls?—Vessels similar to those trading to the Wanganui Wharf, of about 9 ft. to 11 ft. draught. They would be up to 800 tons.

35. Those are the biggest vessels you can take up to the Wanganui Wharf?—Yes, four miles up the river. We are seven miles up the river here.

36. So that you have had to spend all this money in Wanganui for the purpose of obtaining a depth of water of 23 ft. at the bar?—That is for a deep-water harbour at Castlecliff—not the town.

37. You say in your report that you made a previous report on the 18th April, 1911. Is that available now?—Yes. It is on a smaller scale to what I propose now.

38. I suppose we may take it that some one instructed you this year to make the report?—Yes, the Chairman of the Harbour Board.

39. You say in your report of the 18th April, 1911 [Exhibit C] that sufficient funds are now likely to be available. What were you told?—I was told by the Chairman that it was likely they would get the revenue from the wharf.

40. Were you told about what amount would be available?—I understood that they would be able to spend about £1,200 or £1,400 on harbour improvements. It was just a slight indication.

41. First of all you say they have to buy a dredge?—Yes. I estimate that at £8,500.

42. According to your report the annual cost works out at £1,041 for a twelve-hours shift?—Yes.

43. Then you say, "The estimated annual working-expenses, including wages, coal, oil, and repairs, for this dredge is £1,200, or slightly over 2d. per cubic yard." That refers to the New Plymouth dredge?—Yes. The Foxton dredge would cost £1,200 on an eight-hours shift.

44. That £1,200 does not take into consideration interest on capital expenditure or depreciation?—No.

45. Do you find that any expense has to be incurred in maintaining the channel at Wanganui?—Yes, there is a very slight expense after you once get the depth. It is not even now affected by floods except to a very slight extent. It is the initial expense of getting it done. I could not say what it is likely to be here. I do not know enough about the Manawatu to say whether there would be a great expense in maintaining the channel, but I do not think there would be. There is less silt in the Manawatu.

46. You have not made any observations which can enable you to give a definite opinion as to the bottom?—I have given a pretty definite opinion as to the amount of dredging required to give that depth.

47. There is always a certain amount of silting-up at the bar?—Yes, after every fresh.

48. The dredge has to be kept constantly at work down there?—Periodically.

49. *Mr. Weston.*] With regard to the estimate of the cost of a dredge, £8,500, that was a wooden hulk?—Yes. On account of the war I could not get a quotation for anything else.

50. That was the actual quotation for the dredge?—Yes.

51. With regard to the £1,200 as the cost of working-expenses, if you once cut the channel down and got the channel opened up across the bar, would you have the same amount of dredging to do to keep it open?—No, I do not think so.

52. So that there would be less than £1,200 a year to spend once you had done the work thoroughly?—Yes, less coal; but you could not discharge the crew. If the Harbour Board could keep the men going they would be available for the dredge when required.

53. How does this river here in its natural state compare with the Wanganui River in its natural state?—It compares rather better. It is within fixed banks.