

16. *Mr. Myers.*] That would be a matter of great expense. Can you give the Commission any idea at all as to whether it is a matter of thousands of pounds or tens of thousands of pounds, or what do you mean?—It is a very difficult matter to give an opinion on, owing to the almost complete absence of any suitable material obtainable in the district.

17. You mean material for the work you suggest?—Yes, and I should say, judging by what has been spent in other places, that it would run into hundreds of thousands of pounds.

18. Now, it is suggested that this Harbour Board should obtain a sand-dredge with a wooden hull, at a cost of £8,500. It would have a revenue of, say, at the most, £1,500 or £2,000 per annum. In your opinion could any useful work at all be done with that appliance and with that expenditure?—Not working alone.

19. When you say “not working alone,” would you give the Commission some further indication of your meaning?—Because by leaving the river in its present condition without controlling-works the channel would probably be silted up as fast as the dredge could dredge it out.

20. You mean then, I take it, that the work I have suggested to you would not be of any use without controlling-works in the river?—Yes.

21. I want to bring you now to the question of the cost of a new line of railway from Levin to Marton?—Yes.

22. You have gone into that question, have you not?—Not very closely, as we have not any very exact information.

23. But have you gone into it sufficiently to enable you to give something like a definite opinion to the Commission as to the cost of the work?—I know the country fairly well, and I have done some line-location along part of it.

24. I think, as a matter of fact, you did part of the survey-work on the Marton side in the early “seventies”?—Yes. Well, my idea is that it would cost anything between £10,000 and £12,000 a mile, inclusive of everything.

25. So that if the length is forty miles, you think it would cost between £400,000 and £480,000, roughly?—Yes.

26. *Mr. Weston.* You say that there is a large amount of silt coming down the Manawatu?—Yes.

27. And that in your opinion, dredging in the channel of the Manawatu between the harbour and the bar, the tendency would be to fill up at once with the silt brought down?—Yes.

28. Then I suppose I may take it that the conditions of the channel between Foxton Harbour and the bar, in the absence of any attempt to improve the river, will steadily get worse?—Not necessarily.

29. What would become of the silt?—It goes out to sea.

30. All of it?—Yes.

31. You know, of course, that the sixteen miles above the wharf has been steadily shoaling?—I have heard a witness say so.

32. Do you dispute that?—No, I would not dispute it.

33. But if the depth above the wharf is steadily filling up must not that process of filling up in course of time extend farther down the river?—I do not think so. I think that the filling-up in the upper part of the channel is not very much—very slight—and is liable to be scoured out again by one of the large floods.

34. *The Chairman.*] Then do you think the river would maintain its present depth always?—I think so. I see no reason why it should get any shallower. Rivers always have a tendency to silt up during a period of small floods, and when large floods come the former conditions usually obtain again.

35. I suppose in high floods there are banks that direct the current?—Not in the part between Foxton and the bar.

36. They cannot spread over the country?—It does between Foxton, and some distance between there and above Shannon.

37. That should tend to drive the silt out to sea?—Yes.

38. *Mr. Weston.*] There are very few sharp bends below Foxton?—There are two sharp bends—Robinson’s bend and Hartley’s bend.

39. So that but for those two sharp bends you have a fairly straight channel?—Yes.

40. Therefore the tendency would be to have a strong current in flood-time?—Yes.

41. What is the nature of the channel between Foxton Wharf and the Heads?—It is a form of alluvial deposit.

42. And you say that no more alluvial is going to join that deposit in the future?—It may join it, but it will be washed away in one of the heavy floods.

43. You told us you must increase the scour inside—that is the basis of your scheme of retaining-walls?—Yes.

44. You say there is a small fall between the Foxton Wharf and the mouth of the river?—I did not say that, but there is not a great fall.

45. And there is a very slow current?—Not when the tide is running out.

46. I suppose you will admit that coming in there is not a very strong flow in the current—the current is not very strong?—Oh, yes, there is a fairly strong current running up the river.

47. You say that owing to the slow current it was necessary to have retaining-walls right down the channel?—That is on the part where the mouth of the river is really an estuary—between Hartley’s bend and the bar.

48. I may take it that if there is a slow current like that the reason for increasing the current would be to prevent deposit of silt?—Yes.