

- “(b.) To report what area or areas of land should be constituted a district in respect of which a rate may be levied to secure and pay the interest on and provide a fund for the repayment of any loan that may be raised to carry out any river-improvement works which you may recommend should be undertaken ;
- “(c.) To report your opinion as to what matters, if any, should be adjusted by legislation ; and
- “(d.) Generally, to report your opinion on all matters arising out of or touching the premises, including the question as to whether or not one or more competent authorities shall be appointed to control the whole or any portion of the said river, and what statutory powers should be possessed by such authority.”

Your Commission also required us to report separately in respect of each river.

INVESTIGATIONS MADE.

Sittings, Evidence, and Inspections.—Your Commissioners met in Dunedin on the 11th June, 1919, and proceeded to Balclutha on the 12th June. The following day they inspected the damage done by the floods of January, 1919, in the Otanomomo, Inch-Clutha, Kaitangata, and Barnego districts. Among other features particularly examined was the Waitepeka Creek. Flood-levels, &c., at South Molyneux were pointed out by Mr. Ramsay, County Engineer, Clutha County Council.

On the 16th June a duly advertised sitting of the Commission was held in the Courthouse, Balclutha, when eleven witnesses were examined. This did not complete the evidence available at Balclutha, but, a sitting having been advertised for the 17th at Kaitangata, the Commission adjourned the Balclutha sitting and proceeded to Kaitangata, sitting there at the Courthouse and receiving evidence from ten witnesses. On the 18th June the Balclutha sitting was resumed, and further twelve witnesses were examined.

Accompanied by local residents the Commissioners the same day made a tour of inspection of the Balclutha protective works, the salient points of which, and the flood-levels marked thereon, being pointed out.

The following day your Commissioners made an examination by launch of the river below Balclutha, proceeding by one branch and returning portion of the way by the other branch until darkness overtook them.

On the 20th June a sitting was held in Dunedin, when the District Engineer and District Traffic Manager of Railways were examined, and plans relative to the subject were inspected in the Public Works Office, Dunedin. On the 21st June evidence was received from Mr. A. Whitley, Inspector of Metalliferous Mines for the Otago District.

On the 23rd June the Commission proceeded to St. Bathans, and after arrival inspected the mining operations until darkness supervened. On the following day the Commissioners made a further examination of the sluicing claims, with a view to noting the nature and extent of the debris flowing from the mining operations, and also to obtain an idea of the actual amount of material which had been shifted from the claims since the discovery of the goldfields.

At 10 a.m. a sitting of the Commission was held in the Courthouse, and evidence taken from eight representative residents of St. Bathans and the surrounding goldfields.

Later the Commissioners proceeded to Clyde, and the same evening took evidence from Mr. J. E. Menzies, County Engineer, Vincent County Council, and Mr. J. R. Marks, Assistant Engineer, Public Works Department.

On the 25th June as much of the valley of the Clutha as could be covered before midday was examined, particularly the mines at Bannockburn and the Cromwell Gorge. Evidence was then taken from four other witnesses at Clyde, and the Commission proceeded to Alexandra, where the evidence of four more witnesses was secured. The Commissioners then proceeded to Roxburgh.

The following day the sluicing operations at Commissioners Flat and elsewhere in the vicinity of Roxburgh were examined, and later a sitting was held in the