

averaging £30 per acre, making a total value of, say, £112,000. The total area of land between Kaiapoi and Rangiora affected by floods is estimated to be 7,500 acres, the value of which would average £45 per acre. It is claimed that immunity from floods would have the effect of appreciating 1,000 acres of this land by from £10 to £15 per acre.

In addition to the loss by erosion there are the manifold damages of other kinds usually resulting from floods, such as loss of crops, damage to settlers' houses and effects, damage to roads and railway-line, stoppage of traffic, &c., on which, owing to lack of sufficient data, it is impossible to put a money value.

PORT OF KAIAPOI.

The Kaiapoi Harbour Board owns endowments in Kaiapoi to the value of £6,000. The Board has no rating-power, and depends entirely on port dues for its revenue. Since 1914 practically no shipping has been done, but prior to that date a fair amount of trade was carried on for some years by boats carrying about 200 tons on a shallow draught. The bar has been shoaling for some years past, and now has a depth of only 6 ft. at high water. A proposal was made some nine years ago to spend £20,000 on a scheme of harbour-improvement, which it was claimed would, if carried out, deepen the bar so as to permit of the regular trading of boats having an 8 ft. draught. A table showing the imports and exports (by water) to and from Kaiapoi between June, 1910, and May, 1914, is attached hereto.

Much difference of opinion appears to exist among settlers as to the value or otherwise of a port at Kaiapoi, and as to what effect on the bar certain suggested flood-protection works might have if carried out. Many witnesses contend that the port is of very secondary importance compared with the saving of land and the prevention of flood-damage; with this opinion we most certainly agree. The district is well served by railway from Lyttelton; and, apart from the uncertainty involved in bar-harbour working, it is extremely doubtful if, in the matter of cost, sea-borne traffic could compete with railway carriage, except perhaps in a very few classes of goods, such as coal and timber; but even with respect to such possible exceptions as these the benefit would be confined mainly to Kaiapoi Township, and would not extend very far into the country districts along the railway-line.

Should works for the keeping-open of a permanent deep mouth be constructed in the future by the Harbour Board, the plans of these works should not be sanctioned by the Marine Department until they have been considered by the proposed board of control for the Waimakariri River, whose opinions should be given very careful consideration. Your Commissioners consider that the harbour-works can be constructed on such lines as will improve the harbour without hindering the discharge of flood-waters.

LOCAL BODIES INTERESTED.

The local bodies interested in the control of the Waimakariri River are the Eyre County Council, the Kaiapoi Borough Council, the South Waimakariri River Board, the Waimakariri Harbour Board, the Rangiora and Mandeville River Board, and the Ashley County Council.

LAND-TENURE.

The greater part of the land affected by the Waimakariri River is freehold. All the land on the north bank is freehold, with the exception of two or three small reserves. On the south bank, reserves extend from a point approximately six miles below the Gorge to opposite Templar's Island, but most of the remaining land on this bank is freehold. Reserves and freehold land abut on the river in the vicinity of Kaiapoi. Most of the land on the islands in the river is freehold, but there are also reserves and Crown land in the river-bed.