

REFERENCE NO. 5.

- (a.) *To furnish estimates of the cost of such remedial measures as you may recommend should be taken for the effective control and improvement of the said river and its banks.*

Without a great deal of detail surveying, which has not been done and which hardly comes within the scope of this Commission, it is not possible to furnish an estimate of the cost of carrying out the works indicated above. Your Commissioners do not recommend that these works should be done immediately, but that the defining of the river-limits should be proceeded with at once, and that thereafter the works recommended should be carried out in a regular progression, preferably with the revenue available. The greater part of the work consists of coaxing the river rather than coercing it; and it is not required to be done at once, as would be the case if the river were threatening violent damage at any particular point.

The constantly increasing value of timber, particularly in Canterbury, would seem to indicate that a great deal of afforestation might be done on the unnecessarily wide river-bed, which timber in the future would not only pay for the cost of its planting, but would be a valuable source of revenue to the Board, while during its life it would act as a valuable protection to the banks.

- (b.) *To report in the case of each river 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.*

The area of land which 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 the river-improvement works recommended herein by your Commissioners is the whole of the drainage area of the Ashley River, together with the lands lying outside that drainage over which the flood-waters of the Ashley River have flowed in the past.

- (c.) *To report your opinion as to what matters, if any, should be adjusted by legislation.*

Your Commissioners are of opinion that the present district controlled by the Sefton-Ashley Drainage Board should be extended to include the whole of the area referred to above, and that the Board's name should be changed to that of "The Ashley River and Drainage Board." This new Board should not undertake any works on the south side of the river other than such as are necessary to prevent the river overflowing or eroding its banks.

It is recognized that the southern limits of this district will overlap other existing or proposed river and drainage districts, but, as mentioned immediately above, the proposal is made with a view to revenue-producing for the control of the Ashley River, and not with the intention that any drainage or other works should be done on the lands over which the Ashley flood-waters have flowed.

- (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 or portions of the said rivers, and what statutory powers should be possessed by such authority.*

As indicated under reference No. 5 (c), your Commissioners are of opinion that one River and Drainage Board should have control over the whole river and its banks. This controlling authority should be specifically charged with the following duties:—

- (i.) To keep a record of all damage done in its district by flood-waters, both as to extent and monetary value.
- (ii.) To take all necessary observations and keep records that will assist in the study of the hydrology of the river, changes in its regimen, heights and duration of floods, &c.
- (iii.) To have detail surveys, plans, estimates, and specifications made for carrying out the necessary protective works in the district.