

REFERENCE No. 1.

To inquire into the cause or causes of the silting-up of the channel, the flooding of the adjacent lands by the said river, the erosion of its banks, and the damage to the surrounding country.

It may be said that in the case of this river practically the only cause of the silting-up of the channel has been its utter neglect, or worse than neglect, in that willows have not only been allowed to grow but have actually been planted in the bed. This has caused silting-up and consequent flooding, and to a very slight extent erosion of the banks. It is quite probable that flooding occurred even before this choking of the bed was brought about, because the natural banks of the river are ill-defined and low.

REFERENCE No. 2.

To ascertain the nature and extent of the damage done to the lands adjacent to the said river, and what area of land is affected by such floods or erosion, or both, and whether it is practicable at reasonable expense to prevent such flooding or erosion, or both, either wholly or partially.

No figures could be obtained to show the extent of the damage. As floods sweep over the lands bordering the river, the destruction of crops and the smothering of the grass is inevitable. Flooding in this river is, however, inextricably bound up with that in the Orari. The occasions when the Waihi has caused the greatest amount of damage have been when the waters from the Orari have flowed into it, and, of course, out of it again.

For the reasons given above, it is impossible to say what area of land is affected by the floods in the Waihi alone, but it may be said that it is practicable at reasonable expense to entirely prevent such flooding.

REFERENCE No. 3.

To ascertain the best method of providing for the control of the said river and its tributaries so as to safeguard the lands affected, and to provide for the effective control and improvement of the said river and its banks.

The works recommended by your Commissioners are as follows :—

- (a.) To clear out the willows from a channel of adequate width throughout the whole length within which it is infested.
- (b.) To cut off the worst of the bends so as to increase the gradient.
- (c.) To erect levees on each side of the stream wherever the flood grade, raised as it will be by this confinement, comes above the natural banks.

REFERENCE No. 4.

To ascertain the nature and extent of any drainage-works that may be required, and the best method of carrying out such works.

No drainage-works are required for the straightening of the course of the river as indicated above, which will naturally improve the drainage of the surrounding lands.

REFERENCE No. 5.

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

The estimated cost of the works as recommended above by your Commissioners cannot be ascertained until the detailed works are set out on the ground, but should be quite moderate.

- (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 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 Geraldine County should be the 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 by your Commissioners.