

And, using all diligence, you are required to report to me, within a period of three calendar months from the date hereof, under your hands and seals, the result of your inquiry, with any recommendations as you think fit to make in the premises.

And it is hereby declared that these premises shall continue in full force and virtue although your inquiries are not regularly continued from time to time or from place to place by adjournment.

And, lastly, it is hereby further declared that these presents are issued under and subject to the provisions of the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1908, and shall take the place of the Commission issued to Frederick James Burgess, Esquire, of Auckland, Gentleman, late Stipendiary Magistrate, and the said William Stonham Short and George Buchanan, on the 10th day of May, 1921, which Commission is hereby cancelled.

Given under the hand of His Excellency the Governor-General of the Dominion of New Zealand; and issued under the Seal of that
[L.S.] Dominion, at the Government House at Wellington, this eleventh day of July, one thousand nine hundred and twenty-one.

J. G. COATES,
Minister of Public Works.

Issued in Executive Council.

C. A. JEFFERY,
Acting Clerk of the Executive Council.

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL.

Auckland, N.Z., 26th September, 1921.

Re Waihou and Ohinemuri Rivers Commission, 1921.

SIR,—

We have the honour to send herewith the report of the above-mentioned Commission.

The estimated total cost of the work, as disclosed in the evidence (£625,000), is so largely in excess of the original estimate (£130,000, 1910 Commission) that to apportion the annual expenses amongst the contributors involves payments at so high a rate as to render it doubtful whether it will be possible for the contributing authorities to bear them. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that the cost of the works should be reduced, if at all practicable.

The Commission entrusted to us did not empower us to inquire into the engineering aspect of the case, but, in view of the importance, and even necessity, of reducing the cost, we think the engineering aspect of the matter should be carefully inquired into. It seems to us that material economies are practicable, and it also seems questionable whether some of the land proposed to be protected is really worth the great cost of protecting it.

The area of land to be protected by the proposed stop-bank on the east side of the Upper Waihou, between Mangaiti and Paeroa, is somewhat limited. If the whole of the stop-bank on that side of the river between these points were omitted, and also the entire stop-bank on the left bank of the Ohinemuri River as far as the railway-bridge, and if the Pereniki cut is put in, it seems probable that the land that would be prejudicially affected by flooding could be acquired and subsequently resold with an acknowledged liability to flooding, and that the difference between the purchase and the sale prices would be likely to be considerably less than the cost of protecting it would amount to. It is quite likely that the putting-in of the Pereniki cut would so greatly relieve the Ohinemuri River when in flood that the inundated area, without the stop-banks, would not be vastly in excess of the area liable to flood, with a stop-bank on one side, as now proposed. Mr. Buchanan is of opinion that if the Pereniki cut is put in the settlers within this area liable to flood from the Ohinemuri would indemnify the Government against loss or damage by flooding if the stop-banks are omitted.