

Harbour. We have, however, on this point two considerations to submit: The first is that, even as this balance of advantage stands at the present time, it does not nearly outweigh the preponderating tendency of the engineering and navigational aspects. In the second place, the present position can be largely altered, and the necessary facilities attached to the breakwater at a reasonable cost when other aspects of the whole problem justify the construction of that harbour.

We have stated above that we are satisfied that the Breakwater Harbour will require a smaller capital outlay than the Inner Harbour. We desire to comment on the figures and estimates supplied to us in evidence relating to the construction of the two harbour schemes which we were inquiring into. We expected, and we think we were reasonably entitled to expect, that in respect of each harbour we would be supplied with figures representing the best estimate that could be given of the cost of a definite harbour scheme. Our expectations were not realized. The estimates of costs given to us were not of the actual cost of a specified work, but so-called "comparative" costs prepared as propaganda in a party dispute on the merits of the rival harbours. More than once we pressed our requests for statements of actual cost of complete harbour requirements in each case, but our requests were not, and probably at the time of the disposal of witnesses after the inquiry was opened could not, be supplied. Our request was: "Take into account everything that is necessary to construct and equip the Inner Harbour according to the requirements and policy of the Harbour Board, and tell us what that will cost, take into account precisely the same details and requirements in relation to the Outer Harbour and tell us what the total cost would be." We expressed our readiness, when these figures were supplied to us, to listen to any explanations in the way of comparative adjustments or explanations that might tend to show where and why one scheme, starting from the point of view of the present condition of that harbour, might require more expenditure than the other at a given point, but the Board's consulting engineers did not supply us with what we wanted. As an instance of the point of view from which the evidence on questions of cost was tendered to us, we refer to Mr. J. D. Holmes's evidence (page 100, Notes of Evidence). He says there, "To bring the two schemes on to a basis on which it would be *fair to compare their costs*, we include the raising of the height of the breakwater by 10 ft. throughout its length, as recommended by Cullen and Keele's 1912 report, page 9, col. 1, paragraph 3; so that the Outer Harbour would afford shelter comparable to that found in the Inner Harbour."

We wish it to be noted that there was no suggestion that the Harbour Board had ever considered the matter of raising the breakwater, and it was admitted that they had never instructed their consulting engineers to consider or estimate the cost of that work, and yet here we have an item of £223,000 added by the consulting engineers on their own initiative, the object being, to quote Mr. Holmes's own words, "to arrive at a basis on which it would be fair to compare." We cannot refrain from the comment that Mr. Holmes in his evidence announced himself as prepared strongly to recommend the Inner Harbour, and he stated under cross-examination that he could see no redeeming feature at all in the Breakwater Harbour. This being his attitude of mind towards the two schemes, we make no further comment on the fact that £223,000 is without instructions added to the cost of one of the schemes so that the comparison may be fair.

Again, at page 158 of the same witness's evidence (we preface this quotation with reference to the fact that the Breakwater Harbour at present possesses a wharf providing berths for two ships drawing up to 28 ft., whilst the Inner Harbour can accommodate nothing with a greater draught than 15 ft.): "I have allowed for two boats only at Inner Harbour because two are allowed for at Outer Harbour. Cullen and Keele's modified scheme was for four boats. I could not say what additions I would have to make to accommodate four boats; there would be extra dredging and wharving. In our modifications *we cut out two wharves, and altered the quay and the depth of dredging. We only did this for comparative purposes.*"

Here again we are apprised of the fact that an estimate is being put forward for a work that corresponds with nothing the Harbour Board had in view, and which the Board had never instructed the consulting engineers to estimate for. As is pointed out, Cullen and Keele's scheme was for four overseas berths at the Inner Harbour, and (a fact we are dealing with more fully later on), up to the point when this evidence was given there was no suggestion of any other policy than a four-berth Inner Harbour.

The Chairman protested again strongly at this point in the evidence and asked why the Commission should be required to take figures based on something that nobody contemplated, and work up from them to a cost of the harbour that was contemplated. The only answer is that which is apparent from the evidence—viz., that this is done for comparative purposes, and "to be fair" (obviously to the Inner Harbour scheme).

Again, Mr. R. W. Holmes in his evidence on page 216, discussing Cullen and Keele's 1925 estimates in relation to Holmes and Son's 1927 estimates, said: "The item given for the construction of a quay 2,600 ft. in length must be reduced to £114,000, as a *comparison* is now being made between additional accommodation for two ocean liners in the Breakwater Harbour, and the same number in the Inner Harbour." To Chairman: "I cannot say who gave instructions for estimates to be drawn up for two overseas berths at Inner Harbour." Again at page 95 of the evidence of Mr. J. D. Holmes: "The reference I made yesterday to the height of the breakwater was made in regard to the comparison of the amount of shelter provided to shipping between the Inner and Outer Harbour. *This is necessary when comparing the cost of the two schemes.* You cannot compare schemes unless the facilities and other conditions are comparable." Again, on some occasions items of cost were left out of both schemes, the explanation being that a certain thing in one harbour would balance the cost of the corresponding thing in the other harbour. The result of this is that we are left with very little assistance from the Board's consulting engineers in our endeavour to arrive at the cost of construction of either of the harbours as outlined by the engineering proposals that have been before the Board. This has increased our