

We recommend that the duties of this controlling body should include the following :—

- (1.) To have detail surveys, plans, estimates, and specifications made for any works proposed to be carried out on the streams or rivers, or works of drainage or reclamation, within the watershed of the Waikato, or, where Drainage Boards exist within such area, to have power of veto or of consent in respect to any works proposed to be carried out by such Drainage Board :
- (2.) To determine the districts liable to be rated for any works ; to assess the total sum to be derived from each district, and to fix the rates on all properties in each such district, on a classification basis in the ratio of the benefits to be derived according to the principles laid down in the River Boards Act, 1908, and its amendments :
- (3.) To submit the proposals to the ratepayers, and obtain their authority by poll to raise any necessary loans :
- (4.) To carry out the necessary works :
- (5.) To maintain the works efficiently, and to do whatever work may be necessary to improve the regimen of the river and its tributaries, and to secure the fullest protection from floods and the unwatering of low-lying lands, consistent with the efficient maintenance of navigation in the navigable portions thereof :
- (6.) To take all necessary observations, and keep records that will aid in the study of the hydrology of the river, changes in its regimen, height and duration of floods, &c.

The River Conservation Board should have all the powers generally granted to a local body, and, further, should have absolute jurisdiction over the channel and banks of the river ; and all proposals for drains to empty into the river, for locks, tide-gates, bridges, ferries, wharves, &c., should be submitted to and approved by the Board before being carried out. No planting or cutting of willows or other trees within a chain of the bank of the river or of any of its tributaries should be done, except by or under the direction and license of the Board.

Any Drainage Board now existing within the district of the Conservation Board, or hereafter to be formed, to do the drainage work of any particular area or district should be permitted to use the staff of the River Conservation Board, upon terms to be mutually arranged ; to prepare reports, plans, and estimates of drainage-works ; and the River Conservation Board should be enabled, upon request from the Drainage Board, to carry out such works at the expense of such Drainage Board. No work of river-control should be carried out by the River Conservation Board unless and until the plans of the same have been first submitted to and approved by the Minister of Public Works.

The duty should be cast upon the Board of forwarding to the Minister of Public Works at Wellington copies of all valuable data collected relating to rainfall, floods, and the regimen of the river, so that same may be placed on reference in the Government archives.

We recommend that legislation be passed enabling this Waikato River Conservation Board to be set up, including powers to pay such fees to the nominated members of the Board as may be mutually agreed upon between the Minister of Public Works and such nominees, such payment to be made out of public funds.

BRIDGE ACROSS WAITEMATA HARBOUR.

Considerable evidence was placed before the Commission upon the desirability of the construction of a bridge across the Waitemata Harbour to connect the City of Auckland with the northern districts. It was, however, largely of a general character, showing the inconveniences under which residents in the northern suburbs suffer, largely due to alleged deficiencies in the harbour ferry services and more especially in the ferries dealing with vehicular traffic. We visited the northern boroughs and districts in order to satisfy ourselves as to probability of reasonable routes of communication being formed if a bridge could be shown to be economically possible, and as to how far such routes would fulfil the object of enabling the access to be improved in point of time and of convenience.