

this "hump" was the result of the waves striking on the bar. Mr. Thomson was recalled to fix the position of this "hump," which, he stated, was about 450ft. from the commencement of the works.

In answer to Mr. Allen, Mr. Higginson said the deepening at the point indicated by Mr. Allen on the map had nothing to do with the work. The bottom there was always altering in depth in consequence of fine or rough weather. It was too far off to be affected by the work.

197. *Mr. Ross.*] Apart from the financial view, do you think it desirable to continue the works from an engineering point of view?—It was from an engineering point of view I spoke previously. My opinion is, the works are of no use whatever at present. They are not even of any use in improving the bar. If extended a certain distance they will probably improve the bar, and enable them to work vessels by lighters or at the end of the wharf. My impression is that these works will improve the bar so that a vessel may enter even in rough weather.

198. *Mr. Allen.*] In your estimates of receipts and expenditure on page 7 of your report you say an increased rate will be necessary?—Yes; unless trade increases sufficiently to give enough revenue.

The Chairman here brought up the question as to the maximum rate which the Board could levy, and suggested the Committee should obtain the opinion of the Solicitor-General on the question. The suggestion was agreed to.

199. *Mr. Allen.*] Can you give any evidence as to the feeling of the people with regard to the increased rate?—They certainly think the present rate is more than they bargained for. There are people over a large area of the county who never use the harbour at all, and are very bitter against the work.

200. *The Chairman.*] To what extent, as far as your knowledge extends, will these works benefit the people in the north part of Cook County?—Well, considering the state of the roads, and the fact that there are no railways, the benefits will not extend very far.

201. It has been stated by Mr. Ormond that the vessels which could lie alongside the wharf are just now trading to the parts of district in the north of Cook County: is that so?—Yes.

202. So far as these people up there are concerned, then, this work would be of no further benefit to them?—Not to the people in the outer districts.

203. The only benefit they might get would be if ships of considerable tonnage would load wool there?—Yes: if they sent their wool down they could ship it direct.

204. What we are to understand is that, outside of your report, you give your professional opinion that if the works are stopped now they would be entirely useless, and if extended to a distance of 1,160ft. they will give some facilities to the townspeople?—Yes.

205. Also, if the funds were available, it is work you would recommend to be done?—Yes; looking at the matter in its present position.

206. *Mr. Tanner.*] You do not think the additional £40,000 would be wasted?—No, I do not think so.

207. *The Chairman.*] That is not taking into consideration the financial aspect of the question?—No.

JOHN BOURKE examined.

*Mr. Bourke:* I am Secretary to the Gisborne Harbour Board.

208. *The Chairman.*] We want you, amongst other things, to give us if you can, the exact financial position of the Board?—The loan was £200,000. £25,000 was taken as a sinking fund; the expense of raising the loan was £3,153 1s. 4d.; the amount spent on works was £58,382 5s. 4d.: so that there is £86,535 6s. 8d. to be deducted from the £200,000, leaving a balance of £113,464 13s. 4d. From this amount £10,834 1s. 8d. was advanced to the general account for ten years, to be repaid in ten annual instalments, the balance of the loan being £102,630 11s. 8d. This balance is lodged in the bank. We have £85,000 for twelve months at 4½ per cent. in the Union Bank of Australia; £10,000 for six months at 3 per cent., and another £10,000 for six months at 3 per cent. The difference between that amount and £113,000 is made up by loan from the Loan Account to the General Account.

209. Will you give us a statement of your present liabilities and revenue?—Liabilities: Interest on loan, £10,000; exchanges, £192; paid to sinking fund to make up 1 per cent., £521; annual repayment of £10,000 loan from Loan Account, £1,083 8s. 2d. Ordinary expenses (engineering, clerical, &c.), £1,300; bank interest on overdraft, £200: total, £13,296 8s. 2d. With respect to the item, "bank interest on overdraft," the Board had to lodge their moneys for periods of three, six, or twelve months; and during these periods they were very often overdrawn to a considerable extent on their General Account, on which overdraft the bank charged interest. Revenue for year ending the 31st December, 1887: Receipts on General Account—license-fees, £51 17s. 6d.; port charges, £614 18s. 3d.; wharf-dues, £1,895 13s. 11d.; storage and sale of water, £26 8s. 10d.; weighbridge-fees, £40 8s. 6d.: total, £2,629 7s. Interest received from bank on loan-money lodged, £7,152 10s. 1d.

210. *Mr. Tanner.*] Do you levy no rate?—The rate was struck on the 31st August, and up to December £998 9s. 9d. was collected. The whole amount of rate is £5,087 for one year, at ½d. and 1d. in the pound.

*The Chairman:* That gives a total of £10,770 6s. 10d.

At the request of the Committee witness gave the following estimate of the revenue for the current year: Balance on rates, 1887, £4,007; rate for 1888, £5,005; interest on fixed deposits, £5,750; interest on short-dated deposits, £325; receipts on General Account, £2,629 7s.: total, £17,716 7s.

211. *The Chairman.*] If these proposed works are gone on with, your expenses will be increased by what?—Expenses will not be increased.

212. We want to get at what your ultimate position will be?—I have here a statement showing estimate of receipts and expenditure up to 1891. [Statement handed in.]