

- “ (2.) As to whether, in the event of the existing allocation under clause (d), subsection (4), of section 17 of the said Act being varied, what consequential variation should be made in the allocation provided in section 25 of the said Act.
- “ (3.) As to whether, in the event of the existing allocation being varied, the representation provided by section 20 of the aforesaid Act should also be varied, and, if so, to what extent.
- “ (4.) Generally, your opinion on all matters which may be brought before you in connection with the question referred to you, and which in your opinion have any bearing on these premises.”

#### PROCEEDINGS OF COMMISSION.

The Commission assembled at Paeroa on Tuesday, 2nd August ultimo, and formally opened the inquiry at the County Council Chambers on that date, but all sittings subsequent to the opening one were held in the Courthouse at Paeroa.

It was necessary, in order to thoroughly grasp the bearing of the evidence, that an inspection should be made of the two rivers and the country immediately adjacent to them, and the Commissioners therefore devoted the afternoon of the 2nd August to an inspection of the upper portion of the Ohinemuri River and the gold-mines and batteries at Waihi, Waikino, Karangahake, and neighbourhood. On the following day the upper portion of the Waihou River as far as Te Aroha and Shaftesbury was visited, and on Thursday, the 4th, the Lower Waihou between Paeroa and Wharepoa was examined. On Friday, the 5th, the inspections were completed by a visit to the Lower Ohinemuri between Mackaytown and the confluence of the two rivers at the Junction near Puke.

The taking of evidence commenced on Saturday, the 6th August, and continued uninterruptedly to the 17th, inclusive, when an adjournment was made until the 1st September, as two out of Your Excellency's three Commissioners had other important engagements that precluded their further attendance on the business of the Commission just then. On reassembling on the last-mentioned date the taking of evidence was resumed, and continued until the 9th instant, inclusive, when, at 10.30 p.m., the proceedings terminated and the public portion of the inquiry was declared to be closed.

During its investigations the Commission examined fifty witnesses, whose evidence, covering 970 pages of closely typed foolscap, is attached hereto [not printed]. A report of the addresses of counsel, covering a further 133 pages, is also forwarded herewith for Your Excellency's information [not printed].

The proceedings of the Commission were open to the public throughout (except during deliberations), and were fully reported in both the local and the Auckland papers.

Since the public portion of the inquiry was closed your Commissioners have carefully reviewed the evidence in detail, and given the whole matter earnest and mature consideration, and now have the honour to submit to Your Excellency this their report, recommendations, and findings.

#### PARTIES REPRESENTED AT INQUIRY.

The parties represented before the Commission were—

- The Waihi Borough Council (Mr. A. H. Johnstone and Mr. W. M. Jackson);
- The Waihi and Waihi Grand Junction Gold-mining Companies (Mr. H. P. Richmond);
- The Paeroa Borough Council (Mr. J. L. Hanna);
- The Ohinemuri County Council (Mr. J. F. Montague);
- The Hauraki Plains County Council, the Hauraki Drainage Board, the Komata North Branch of the New Zealand Farmers' Union, the Netherton Branch of the New Zealand Farmers' Union, the settlers on the banks of the Waihou and Ohinemuri Rivers, the Paeroa Chamber of Commerce, the Tirohia Progressive League, and the Tirohia-Rotokohu Ratepayers' Association (Mr. E. W. Porritt);
- The Piako and Matamata County Councils and the Te Aroha Borough Council (Mr. G. Gilchrist);
- The Thames County Council (Mr. T. W. Rhodes, M.P.);
- The Public Works Department and the Thames Borough Council (Mr. E. J. Clendon).