

manor, having been undisturbed in the custom, legal prescriptive right was asserted, overriding any hypothetical claim of the Crown to exercise jurisdiction. The late Lord Farrer (then Sir Thomas Farrer), in a memorandum to officials of the Board of Trade, was careful to explain that the rights of the Crown rested on a somewhat doubtful assumption, and that, in the assertion of those supposed rights, great caution must be exercised to avoid possible litigation.

The subject is now ripe for statutory action, and the recommendations of the Royal Commission are available as the basis of such legislation. Within the ambit of this handbook their principal recommendations are as follows:—

1. On the subject of accretion and depletion as affecting title, the law to be amended so as not to deprive the Crown of accreted ground where there is well-defined ascertainable boundary to the land of a contiguous owner.

2. That the Board of Trade should have the sole administrative control of foreshores.

3. A clear right of passage by foot along the foreshore, subject to the control of the Board of Trade, is recommended; and, in respect of the rights assumed to exist for bathing, riding, driving, collecting seaweed, &c., it is suggested that the Board of Trade should be given executive authority.

4. On the wide question of the executive administration and active maintenance of the foreshore the Commission quote in summary the suggestion for creating *ad hoc* authorities. This scheme made provision for the division of the coast-line into districts,¹ each district being administered by bodies of County Coast Commissioners and a district engineer or coast warden, whose recommendations would be subject to the central control of a chief engineer under the ægis of the Board of Trade.

A scheme of equitable division of the cost of shore works was also evolved.

Other recommendations were for placing practically complete control in the hands of the respective County Councils.

The report of the Commission is in favour of making the

¹ "Memorandum with regard to the Proposed Creation of Coast Commissioners" (A. E. Carey), Appendix No. XVII.