

owners of littoral lands would be compelled to fence them, in order to avoid establishing inconvenient rights. Such admission would be distinctly to the detriment of the public, as, if conceded, lands capable of being developed into the sea front of a prospective watering-place would be jealously fended from the incursion of the public.

The state of the law in respect of the ownership of seaside lands in foreign countries may be briefly summarized as follows:<sup>1</sup>—

**France.**—Foreshore lands covered at high water form part of the *Domaine Public National*, and are administered by the *Département des Travaux Publics*. The State stands aloof from responsibility in respect of erosion, except that where owners form *Associations Syndicales de Défense* the State sometimes grants subventions. The landowners have no right to remove sand or shingle except with the authority of the *Préfet* or *Ministre des Travaux Publics*, the price for same being fixed by the *Domaines de l'État*. If the sea recedes, such recession becomes the property of the State; if the sea encroaches, the landowner receives no indemnity from the State.

**Belgium.**—The ownership of the foreshore is vested as in France. The definition of the phrase "foreshore" given by the *Ordonnance de la Marine* of 1681, is that area covered and uncovered at new and full moons by the greatest flood in the month of March. The limit actually adopted to-day is the line assumed by the tidal curve on the coast 5.21 metres above zero, Ostend, which mark corresponds with the average level of low-water spring tides. From the tidal curve thus indicated is defined the dividing line between private property and that under the control of the *Domaine Public*. Thus it will be noted that the practice adopted by the State Departments of Belgium accords with the method evolved by those engaged in the Burnham case, cited above, as the only plan of delimitation consistent with accuracy. The State in Belgium assumes no responsibility in respect of protection of the coast-line or the effects of erosion. The rights of littoral owners do not extend beyond the boundaries defined above, and foreshore lands

<sup>1</sup> "Coast Erosion" (A. E. Carey), *Proc. Inst. C. E.*, Vol. CLIX, pp. 1-103.