

1920.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY:

DRAINAGE OPERATIONS IN HAURAKI PLAINS.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1920, TOGETHER WITH STATEMENT
OF ACCOUNTS.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 10 of the Hauraki Plains Act, 1908.

Sir,—

Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, 7th July, 1920.

I have the honour to submit herewith the report on the drainage operations in the Hauraki Plains for the past year, in accordance with the provisions of the Hauraki Plains Act, 1908.

The total area thrown open for selection to date is 40,391 acres, valued at £281,950. It is hoped to increase these figures at an early date.

The total expenditure under the Act has now been as follows:—

				£	s.	d.
For the year ended 31st March, 1908	...	...	...	5,070	0	0
„ 1909	...	...	...	11,672	5	6
„ 1910	...	...	...	22,235	2	11
„ 1911	...	...	...	32,103	14	0
„ 1912	...	...	...	40,084	13	1
„ 1913	...	...	...	26,608	1	3
„ 1914	...	...	...	21,467	18	2
„ 1915	...	...	...	20,399	10	4
„ 1916	...	...	...	18,331	10	10
„ 1917	...	...	...	18,405	17	10
„ 1918	...	...	...	26,588	19	7
„ 1919	...	...	...	31,575	11	8
„ 1920	...	...	...	74,805	12	4
Total	...	...	...	£349,348	17	6

The detailed report of the Chief Drainage Engineer is attached, together with a statement of accounts and balance-sheet.

I have, &c.,

T. N. BRODRICK, Under-Secretary.

The Hon. D. H. Guthrie, Minister of Lands.

REPORT OF CHIEF DRAINAGE ENGINEER.

Sir,—

I have the honour to submit the annual report on the drainage operations carried out on the Hauraki Plains for the year ended 31st March, 1920.

The concluding year has been generally a most successful season on the plains. Many outside and experienced dairy-farmers have been induced by the exceptional quality of the land to buy farms on the plains, and in consequence a phenomenal advance in the price thereof has been experienced. Recent sales in the central district have recorded up to £115 per acre for improved farms, while in the Tahuna-Patetonga peat country £45 to £65 per acre has been realized.

The effect of these prices will be that closer settlement and more thorough cultivation will be necessary, which should result in a very rapid increase in the productive value of the plains. The value of the stock sold at Ngatea, Patetonga, and Waitakaruru saleyards for the concluding