

1920.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY:

RANGITAIKI LAND DRAINAGE.

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 Rangitaiki Land Drainage Act, 1910.

SIR,—

Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, 14th July, 1920.

I have the honour to submit herewith the report upon drainage operations in the Rangitaiki Plains for the year ended 31st March, 1920, pursuant to the provisions of the Rangitaiki Land Drainage Act, 1910.

The report of the Chief Drainage Engineer, Mr. J. B. Thompson, is attached hereto, from which it will be seen that good progress has been made with the works during the year, although the scarcity of labour restricted the scope of operations, and most of the land already drained has been subdivided and settled with satisfactory results.

The accompanying statement of cash transactions and balance-sheet shows the financial transactions for the year, and the position of the account as at the 31st March last.

I have, &c.,

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

T. N. BRODRICK, Under-Secretary.

REPORT OF CHIEF DRAINAGE ENGINEER.

SIR,—

In accordance with the provisions of the Rangitaiki Land Drainage Act, 1910, I have the honour to submit my report on the drainage operations for the year ended 31st March, 1920.

The year has been one of marked progress on the Rangitaiki Swamp. More especially is this to be noticed in those districts where the larger properties have been subdivided; here the influx of new settlers, many of them returned soldiers, has shown most satisfactory results, and land which for years has lain idle, chiefly because of the incapacity of single men to deal with the hundreds and sometimes thousands of acres they own, has now been drained, cleared, and sown down in grass and crops. An abundance of "fall" is now available on by far the greater portion of the swamp, and settlers are taking advantage of this to deepen their private drains with very beneficial results.

A considerable amount of widening and deeping of drains has been carried out during the year, and all drains have been cleaned out periodically. Heavy timber was encountered in certain areas, and a considerable amount of explosives was of necessity used in removing same. Two new Priestman dredges have been taken to works and are now being assembled. I am also commissioned to purchase in America suitable up-to-date plant for maintenance of outfalls. These will probably be of "caterpillar" or "walking" type of excavators, as it is desirable to utilise this type for subsequent maintenance. Their arrival will release "grab" dredges for other works.