

certainly be cut from the centre of the lake well out into the deeper parts of the Waipori Lake, with a splayed outlet into the shallow water, as described above for the outlet of Lake Waipori.

From the upper end of the channel just described similar channels should be cut connecting with the mouth of Lee Creek, the main drain, and any other drains now existing or to be constructed.

Where the main channel just described crosses the Henley-Berwick Road (now the main levee defending the plain against backwater from the lakes when in flood) sluice-gates of sufficient sectional area must be provided, through which the drainage from the plain could be discharged into the Waipori Lake on any occasion when, through stress of weather or other cause, the water in the Maori Lake was higher than that in the Waipori Lake.

In the vicinity of these sluice-gates a powerful low-lift pumping plant should be erected, capable of discharging the water from the bottom of the excavated channels in the Maori Lake against the highest head likely to be encountered in the Waipori Lake for any length of time. This may probably be taken as 7 ft. on the Drainage Board's datum.

Your Commissioners ascertained that the efficiency of the centrifugal pump installed by the Drainage Board at their present pumping-station was extremely low, and it will be necessary when fitting up the new pumping-station to ensure that similarly inefficient machines are not installed.

When the flood-waters have been pumped down to a fairly low level, the existing main drains apparently are not able to bring the water to the present pumps as fast as the pumps can discharge it into the lake. It will be realized, then, that if more powerful pumps are provided it will be advisable, if they are to be utilized to their fullest extent, that the main drain, including the Lee Creek, be deepened and possibly widened. This is not an absolutely essential work, but is desirable; and the question as to whether it is better to spend money in deepening or, alternatively, in having a pumping-station standing by waiting for the water to come, must be considered by the Board's engineer.

When the Maori Lake has been dredged as outlined, and its waters are kept permanently at the lowest level practicable—probably 1 ft. or more below low-water mark—there will be an appreciable reservoir into which the drains can discharge while pumping is not in progress. The result of this will be that, while adequately draining the land, it will yet be possible to store the water during the day and only pump after midnight, when electric power can be obtained at a minimum of cost.

The scheme of draining and pumping above outlined is practically that set out in Mr. Michael Elliot's report of the 14th February, 1910, which was apparently partly carried out and then abandoned, owing, it is stated, to opposition by the Maoris to the drying of the lake over which they have, or are alleged to have, fishing-rights. Your Commissioners cannot conceive that such a consideration as fishing-rights in a lake which is almost dry, and which could therefore have no commercial value to any one, should be allowed to weigh against the enormous benefits, financial and otherwise, which would accrue to the settlers and the State if the Maori Lake were utilized for the purposes herein indicated, and in which capacity it would be doing a service infinitely greater than ever it will do as a fishing-ground for Natives. Your Commissioners are of opinion that the lake is of no financial value to the Natives; but, even so, it would be better to waive this point and, even in opposition to strict justice, to take the lake and pay the Maoris some compensation in order to wipe out their opposition for ever. If their demands are extortionate, then by the provisions of a special Act their rights should be extinguished and Parliament should fix a sum, which should be a purely nominal one, to be paid to any Natives who could establish the fact that at present they are making any substantial use of the lake.

Certain lands, which will under the scheme outlined above be outside the main defences, require improved drainage in order that the flood-waters by which they will be covered in flood-time may run off as quickly as possible, but it did not appear to your Commissioners that detail matters of this kind should be dealt with by them.