

SESSION II.
1923.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY.

RANGITAIKI LAND DRAINAGE.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1923, 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, 5th June, 1923.

I have the honour to submit herewith the report upon drainage operations in the Rangitaiki Plains for the year ended 31st March, 1922, pursuant to the provisions of the Rangitaiki Land Drainage Act, 1910.

As in the case of Hauraki Plains reclamation operations, a much greater amount of spoil was dredged during the year than in the preceding period, or about 14 per cent. The use of bigger, better, and more dredges has justified their cost, and will enable the fertile plains between the Whakatane and Tarawera Rivers to be completely drained in a shorter time than would otherwise be the case.

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. A plan showing operations is attached.

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

I have, &c.,

J. B. THOMPSON, 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 for the year ended 31st March, 1923.

Marked progress has been made during the period over all works, and a corresponding improvement is noticeable in the general development of the country affected. The dredging plant has been working at full capacity and has got through a creditable amount of work. Generally the district is going ahead rapidly, and a great future is predicted for this first-class area of land. A tendency to subdivide is noticeable, smaller holdings being sufficiently productive with the more intensive cultivation permissible. Dairying is becoming popular throughout the district, and the Tarawera Factory returns for the year ending 31st March were 300 tons cheese, and the amount paid to suppliers £28,000, an increase of £7,000 over last year's payments. The Rangitaiki Factory turned out 553½ tons of butter and paid out £78,100, an increase of £36,100 over last year's payments.

The works are now being rapidly pushed on towards completion, a great deal of the operations now in hand being final improvements to existing work. The dredging in hand will be practically all completed during the coming period, and thenceforth the work will mostly consist of minor maintenance.

Rainfall.—The total rainfall for the year was 42.29 in., the wettest month being January, 1923, with a fall of 5.74 in., and the driest July, 1922, fall 0.44 in. The average rainfall for the past five years was 46.89 in.