

1924.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY.

RANGITAIKI LAND DRAINAGE.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1924, 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 August, 1924.

I have the honour to submit herewith the report upon drainage operations in the Rangitaiki Plains for the year ended 31st March, 1924, pursuant to the provisions of the Rangitaiki Land Drainage Act, 1910.

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.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. A. D. McLeod, Minister of Lands.

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 annual report for the year ended 31st March, 1924.

Throughout the period under review very satisfactory progress has been made, and, as anticipated, with the exception of several dredging projects, very little construction work remains to be done. It can now be safely said that the major portion of the swamp is receiving the full benefit likely to accrue from the drainage-system, and is ready for a vigorous prosecution of farming activities. This must, of course, go hand in hand with internal subdivisional drainage. The dairying industry has made great strides on the plains during the year, and the farmers have shown progressive foresight in the erection of a new and very up-to-date butter-factory in a central position on the Rangitaiki River. The amount of butter manufactured during the year was 633 tons, an increase of 79½ tons over last year's production; and the amount paid to suppliers was £80,861. The Tarawera Cheese-factory turned out 320 tons of cheese, and paid its suppliers £35,840.

The works remaining to be done will be pushed on to completion as quickly as possible so that the remainder of area can be brought to full production.

Rainfall.—The total rainfall for the year was 60.11 in., the wettest month being September, with a fall of 6.69 in., and the driest, November, with a fall of 1.31 in. The average rainfall for the past six years was 49.09 in. From this it will be noted that this year's was an abnormal fall.

EASTERN DISTRICT.

The various drains and outfalls in this locality have been periodically cleaned and maintained, and in many cases deepened where extra depth was obtainable consequent on dredge operations in the main outfalls. Before the coming winter it is hoped to have all drains completed to their final depths and in good order, and any future work will be purely maintenance. The cleaning and improvement of the Orini Stream by Monighan dredge No. 17 has filled a much-needed want in this locality, and immediate benefit is being felt from its completion. The opening of the Kopeopeo outfall and the erection of a flood-gate at the Whakatane River end have made this outfall a splendid catchwater for the many drains leading into it, and have given the area served the full benefit of low water in the Whakatane River. The remaining construction work of any moment will be in the White-pine Bush area, and this will be put in hand early in the coming period by Monighan No. 17.