

All existing works are being maintained to their full efficiency, and the remaining construction work will be pushed on to completion as early as possible.

Rainfall: The total rainfall for the year was 62·27 in., rain falling on seventy-one days. The wettest month was April, with a fall of 8·06 in., and the driest March, with a fall of 0·57 in. The average rainfall for the past seven years was 50·97 in.; from which it will be seen that this, like the past year, has been an abnormally wet one.

EASTERN DISTRICT.

Maintenance work on the various drains and outfalls in this locality has been carried out periodically, also improvement and deepening where necessary. The completion of the dredging in the Orini Stream, and the consequent deepening of the various subsidiary hand drains, has made a decided improvement in this area. The dredging of the Waioho Stream and deviations, and the erection of a stop-bank to prevent flooding, which work is now nearing completion, should be of immense benefit to this area of first-class land. Generally the works in this district are in good condition, and on completion of the construction work now in hand will require only periodical maintenance to serve the areas depending on them.

WESTERN DISTRICT.

During the period dredging was completed in the two main areas requiring attention—namely, Awakaponga district, to the west of the Tarawera River, and the area served by the Tarawera flood-gate. The deepening and improvement of the subsidiary drains in these areas is well in hand. The stop-banking of the Tarawera River was completed northwards as far as the railway, and Priestman No. 9 is operating from the railway to the coast, completing the stop-banking of the eastern bank. The danger from flooding in this river has now been considerably minimized. Widening and deepening work, together with the erection of a stop-bank was carried out in the lower reaches of the Awaiti Stream, to provide both a better outlet for the large area southwards, and as a preventive against flooding in the flood-gate area. The stone groyne which was completed early in the period has been very effective in keeping an open channel at the mouth of the Tarawera River where it enters the sea through the sandhills. Last winter considerable erosion took place in the Rangitaiki River stop-banks owing to the continued high level of the river. In many places protective willowing was resorted to, but at McCracken's Bend it was thought advisable to provide a flood-channel across the bend. This work was put in hand late in the period, and a 50 ft. channel was scooped out for a length of 16 chains. In this district, as in the eastern district, any future work, apart from the construction work already in hand, will be purely maintenance of existing drains and stop-banks.

DREDGES.

Altogether six dredges, comprising three Priestman, two Monighan drag-lines, and one Bay City dipper dredge, have been continuously employed on works. A total of 626,762 yards of spoil was lifted during the period, covering a total distance of 1,999 chains. The cost per cubic yard of spoil removed was 6·11d.

The following table shows the total amount excavated, with the cost per cubic yard, for the past ten years:—

	Cubic Yards.	Cost per Cubic Yard.		Cubic Yards.	Cost per Cubic Yard.
1915-16 ..	224,740.	4·54d.	1920-21 ..	215,768	8·82d.
1916-17 ..	261,751	4·36d.	1921-22 ..	473,994	6·68d.
1917-18 ..	320,614	3·72d.	1922-23 ..	540,802	8·13d.
1918-19 ..	229,659	5·70d.	1923-24 ..	788,059	5·56d.
1919-20 ..	176,672	6·62d.	1924-25 ..	626,762	6·11d.

No. 4 Priestman completed the dredging of the old Rangitaiki River bed up to the Matata Road crossing. The plant then worked back up Seccombe's drain to Section 110 drain, and along this as far as the eastern boundary of Section 108. This completed the programme in the locality, and the plant is now being dismantled in the Tarawera River. During the period this plant dredged a distance of 568 chains and removed 113,249 yards of spoil.

As this year probably finishes the career of No. 4 on the Rangitaiki Swamp, it is fitting to mention that this machine has been in service since March, 1913, and during the twelve years has lifted no less than 1,159,595 cubic yards of spoil. In that time the dredge had one thorough overhaul and no major breakages. This is a very creditable record, and demonstrates the value of the Priestman type of dredger on works such as these. It is anticipated that with a further overhaul the plant will be ready for another twelve years on some other area.

No. 8 Priestman dredge has been working throughout the year erecting stop-banks to prevent flooding in the Tarawera River. Late in the period the plant completed work as far north as the railway, and the machine was then taken back to open up the Tumurau drain on the western bank of the Tarawera River, where previously a private dredge had been operating. During the period a total distance of 300 chains was covered, and 122,680 yards of spoil lifted and deposited to form stop-banks.