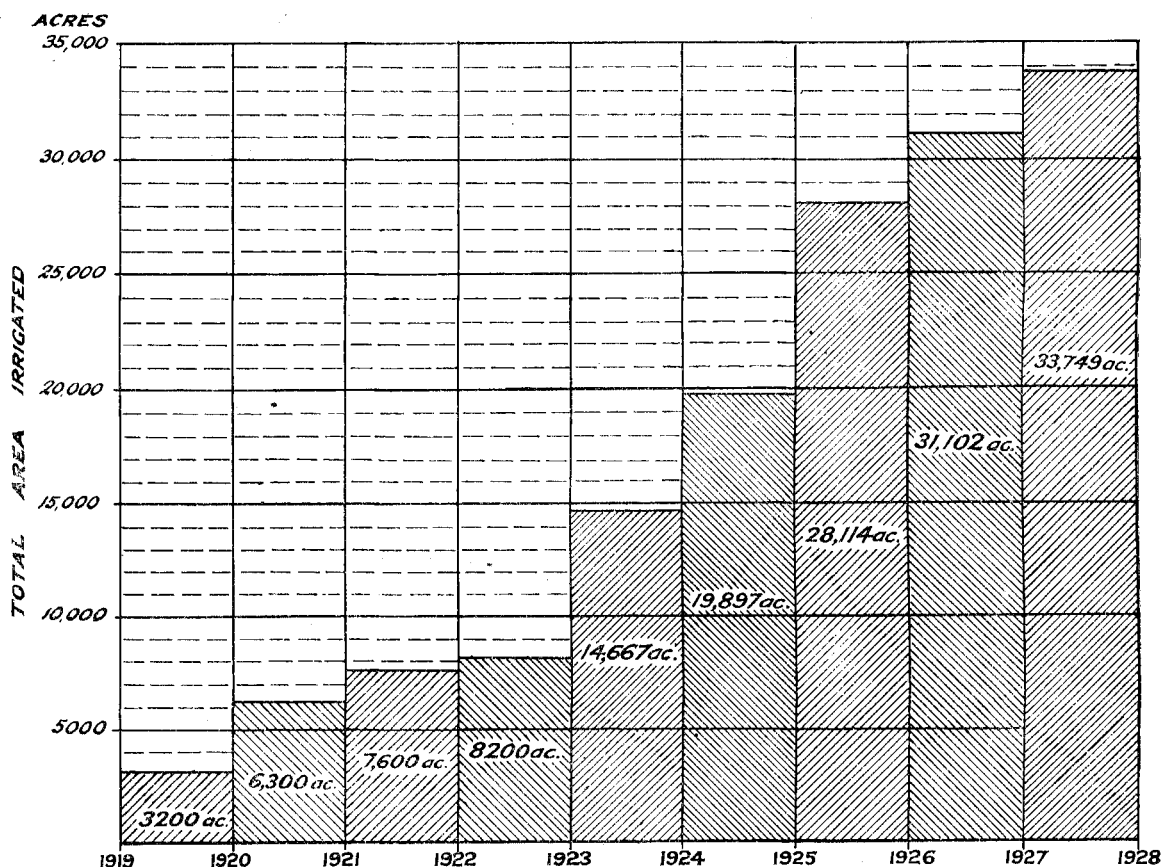




During last irrigation season very strong representations were made to the Government as to certain features of irrigation administration, it being alleged that the supply of water provided by some of the irrigation agreements was insufficient for certain lands, and that there was urgent need for classifying irrigation lands. After an examination of the district by the Prime Minister and Ministers of Public Works and Lands, the Government decided to set up an investigating committee, under the chairmanship of the Assistant Engineer-in-Chief of the Public Works Department, to report to the Government. The order of reference of this committee included an examination into the questions of the duty of irrigation-water, of the question of the rates of payment therefor, and of the future administration of irrigation undertakings. This committee has now completed an exhaustive investigation and is preparing its report, and I have no doubt that when this comes before the Government for consideration it will be found that the report is a most valuable and constructive one.

ROAD-CONSTRUCTION.

The past year again saw very great progress made with the roading schemes whereby access is being provided for those settlers in the back districts, and also on the improvements, by way of widening and surfacing, to the many uncompleted roads. Each year the extension and improvement of the roads throughout the Dominion is assisting more settlers with the better working of their lands, and the record expenditure by the Government of £1,253,801 on roadworks, including main highways, during last year will show the great strides which are being made in this direction. The figure quoted, as was the case last year, shows a very considerable advance on the amount expended on roadworks during the preceding year.