

Drains.—Some sixty-two miles of drains were cleaned during the year.

Stop-banks.—The repairing of the stop-banks undertaken last year was carried on this year to the extent of the vote, and the repairs effected should provide a better safeguard against ordinary spring tides, but not against the exceptional spring tides which are experienced occasionally in this locality.

River Protection.—Severe erosion occurred on a bend in the Awanui River adjoining the Kaitia small farms. Immediate remedial measures were taken, and the bank is now holding satisfactorily behind a protection of raking piles and sheathing.

Works Expenditure.—The total expenditure for the year was £1,039 10s. 4d.

Drainage Rates.—The following schedule shows the position of the rates struck and collected in the two wards :—

		Capital.		Maintenance.	
		Struck.	Collected.	Struck.	Collected.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Town		406 18 10	301 16 9	199 4 6	126 18 4
Rural		2,898 16 3	585 4 11	1,485 5 3	294 17 5

HIKURANGI DRAINAGE AREA (50,000 ACRES), WHANGAREI COUNTY.

No work was carried out on this area during the year. The only expenditure was the overseer's wages, amount to £230.

WAIHI DRAINAGE AREA (20,000 ACRES), TAURANGA COUNTY.

The drainage outlets, stop-banks, and flood-gates in this area were again maintained by the Department, the bulk of the hand drains being maintained by contract labour. The total length of drains maintained annually is 37 miles 73 chains. A length of drain totalling 168 chains was reconditioned during the year. One length of drain totalling 184 chains was handed over to the flax-milling company leasing portion of the area for maintenance purposes. Repairs were carried out to several flood-gates during the year.

Flax-milling was carried on for the greater part of the year by the company leasing a portion of the unsettled swamp area. Late in the year this company surrendered its lease of an area totalling 1,600 acres between the Wharere and Pongakawa Canals, and this area will be developed by the Department.

Satisfactory progress was made in the development of the block of 1,000 acres of swamp lands west of the Wharere Canal. An electric flood-pump was installed to serve an area of 400 acres, and this has already effected a marked improvement. The five dairy-farms established have done well, and a further dairy-farm will be established in the coming year. The balance of the area is being consolidated with cattle and sheep before being settled.

The expenditure during the year was £849 14s. 2d.

Drainage rates struck totalled : Capital £752 15s. 1d., maintenance £1,247 6s. 2d. : whilst the amount collected was : Capital £285 6s. 9d., maintenance £712 16s. 6d.

POUKAWA DRAINAGE AREA (15,567 ACRES) HAWKE'S BAY.

Maintenance of completed works was carried out during the year, and I am indebted to the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Napier, for carrying out the inspections of the cleaning contracts.

The expenditure during the year was £128 1s. 7d.

Rates struck amounted to £1,121 1s. 5d. (capital only), whilst £187 17s. 11d. was collected by the District Office at Napier.

I have, &c.,
R. L. INNIS,
Land Drainage Engineer.

The Under-Secretary for Lands, Wellington.