STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS (AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 10 OF THE HAURAKI PLAINS ACT, 1908) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st March, 1916.

Receipts.				Expenditure.			
1915—April 1st.	£	s. d. £	s. d.	1916—March 31st.	£	8.	d.
To Balance—Cash in	Pu blic			By Expenditure—			
Account		4,26	19 4	Drainage-works, stop-banks, clearing			
1916-March 31st.				channels, and all expenses incidental			
To New Zealand Loan	s Act,			thereto	11,594	6	9
1908; Hauraki	Plains			Equipment of dredges, repairs, and			
Act, 1908—Debe	ntures			maintenance thereof	1,631	16	9
$is sued \qquad \dots$		11,000	0 0	Travelling-allowances and general ex-			
Receipts under sect	zion 5,			penses		19	
Hauraki Plains	Act,			Office expenses—Thames		14	
1908				Sinking artesian wells for settlers	701	2	6
Rents	9,449			Compensation for land acquired in		7.0	
Land sales	1,347			connection with drainage-works	64	13	()
${f Miscellaneous}$	743	8 8			14 000	10	1.0
		11,540	3 6	T	14,333	13	W
				Interest recouping the Consolidated Fund	3,997	10	Δ
				Fund	0,801	IU	U
				Charges and expenses in connection			
				with issue of debentures	n	7	Λ
				Balance—Cash in Public Account	8,474		
		·		Burellog Charlet Land House			
		£26,806	2 10		£26,806	2	10
			-				=
			_				
			Loan	Account.			
1916March 31st.		£	s. d.	1915—April 1st.	£	s.	d.
To Balance	• •	160,628	0 0	By Balance due to Local Bodies' Loans		_	_
				Account	40,628	0	0
				Debentures issued under the State-			
				guaranteed Advances Act, 1909, and	0" 000	^	Λ
				amendments	95,000	0	U
				Debentures issued under the New	16,000	0	0
				Zealand Loans Act, 1908 Debentures issued under the Hauraki	10,000	U	0
				Plains Amendment Act, 1913	9,000	0	A
				- Tanks Amendment Act, 1919			
		£160,628	0 0		160,628	0	0
				•			

REPORT BY CHIEF DRAINAGE ENGINEER.

SIR.-

I have the honour, in accordance with the provisions of the Hauraki Plains Act, 1908, to report upon the various operations carried out during the financial year ending the 31st March, 1916.

Owing to the war and the necessity for economy the development of the whole scheme has not progressed as fast as in previous years. The main works have been confined to the improvements in the drainage and the roading of the areas previously thrown open for settlement. This was especially necessary last March (1915), when a large area of land was thrown open before the roads and drains were completed. However, a large number of these works have been completed since that date, and the balance will be undertaken in due course.

Naturally, works were undertaken which benefit lands that cannot be thrown open for years to come, and so there is no immediate gain to the Department. This refers particularly to Waikaka, where long outlets have been and are being constructed, and so far the areas on the upper portions only have been thrown open for selection.

The maintenance of the roads and drains is a big undertaking now, especially since it was proved that a large number of the drains require to be cleared of weeds, &c., twice per year. In most drainage-areas once per year suffices, but with a small fall per mile and a mild climate the weeds flourish so luxuriantly that one clearing is insufficient. As years go by new aquatic weeds make their appearance in the drains, and it is very hard to keep all the drains in an efficient state.

During the year there was a special grant of £2,000 to assist in maintaining the drains, &c., but this did not cover all the expenditure under this heading, the balance being charged up against the Settlement Account.

As was anticipated in my last report, there has not been a ballot for sections on the plains during the past year: therefore the area under occupation is still 38,994 acres, subdivided into 294 sections, exclusive of town sections.

The pursuits followed have been dairying and grazing, cropping being confined to a few patches of maize for autumn feed, and a few patches of turnips at Waikaka and Tahuna.

The season, which was extremely wet in the spring and then became very dry, was not as profitable per cow as the previous season. Home separation is still in vogue; in fact, this is the only method of disposing of the cream, which is collected by launch and taken to the factory at Kopu, or transhipped to Frankton.