

1932.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY.
DRAINAGE OPERATIONS IN HAURAKI PLAINS.
REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1932, TOGETHER WITH STATEMENT
OF ACCOUNTS.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 20 of the Hauraki Plains Act, 1926.

SIR,— Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, 1st July, 1932.
I have the honour to present herewith the report of the Chief Drainage Engineer on operations carried out during the past year on the Hauraki Plains in accordance with the provisions of the Hauraki Plains Act, 1926.

I have, &c.,
W. ROBERTSON,
The Hon. E. A. Ransom, Minister of Lands. Under-Secretary for Lands.

REPORT OF CHIEF DRAINAGE ENGINEER.

SIR,— I have the honour to submit the twenty-fourth annual report on the Hauraki Plains works for the financial year ending 31st March, 1932.

During the period under review low export prices for dairy-produce prevailed, and though the position is becoming increasingly difficult for many settlers they show a spirit of fortitude and determination to overcome difficulties that is the best augury for the quick recovery and permanent prosperity of the district when normal times return. Low prices are being to some extent counter-balanced by increased production from enlarged and improved herds. The very satisfactory increase in production is, however, generally due to systematic herd-improvement carried out over a period of years rather than the result of extensive farm-improvements. It can be said without hesitation that few, if any, of the farms on the reclaimed land are producing to full capacity. It can also be said that with due attention to the important matter of herd-improvement, the most promising means of stabilizing returns by increasing production to offset reduced prices is by farm-development, closer subdivision, and more intense cultivation. While every effort possible under present economic conditions is being made to maintain the uninterrupted progress of the district by improving drainage conditions, roads, and other public utilities, the individual settlers with farms in the process of development have found that their plans for farm-improvement must be curtailed or deferred on account of reduced returns. The effect of the depression would be reduced to a minimum as far as most of the plains settlers are concerned if the unused acreage of the farms could be brought into a state of production. The scheme now being inaugurated by the Unemployment Board to allow for farm-development work offers a practical means of carrying out these farm-improvements and at the same time to provide employment for a large number of men.