

1933.  
NEW ZEALAND.

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DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY.

DRAINAGE OPERATIONS IN HAURAKI PLAINS.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1933, TOGETHER WITH STATEMENTS  
OF ACCOUNTS.

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

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SIR,—

Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, 1st August, 1933.

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,

Under-Secretary for Lands.

The Hon. E. A. Ransom, Minister of Lands.

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REPORT OF CHIEF DRAINAGE ENGINEER.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit the twenty-fifth annual report on the Hauraki Plains works, giving details of the progress made during the year ending 31st March, 1933.

Farming activities on the Hauraki Plains have been assisted by a succession of good seasons. Production has been steadily increasing, but falling prices have naturally resulted in decreased returns for an increased output. In 1929–30 financial year, production to the value of over £595,000 was recorded. Since then there has been a quantitative increase in all the main products, excepting flax, but production values have fallen to approximately £376,000 for the year under review. The quantity of butter produced in 1929–30 was 2,584 tons and in 1932–33 2,754 tons, an increase of about 6 per cent. Cheese production for the same periods increased from 1,686 tons to 2,797 tons, an increase of 65 per cent. The value of stock sold through those dealers who have kindly supplied returns is £23,000. Only 180 tons of fibre and tow was produced during the past year, most of the mills having been closed for practically three years.

There is, however, no lack of evidence of an unshaken faith in the district's expansion. A land-ballot held in November for seven sections of a total area of 600 acres attracted about two hundred applicants, and there was an equally keen demand when an area of 540 acres of the Koromatua Block was offered for selection in four sections in July.

A further advance in the progress of the district is indicated by the handing-over during the year of the control of the drainage system of a large area at Waitakaruru to the Hauraki Plains West Drainage Board, and it is probable that on completion of the Miranda drainage scheme an additional 4,700 acres will be added to this district in the near future. Change from Government to local body marks the period in the process of development when essential construction has been completed and continuous farm production is assured.

The rainfall at Kerepechi in 1932 was 32.05 in., which is exceptionally low. It has been below the average for the past four years, with a remarkable freedom from flood-producing storms. Though more rain would have been beneficial to the pasture last year, there is no doubt that the dry periods have helped to bring about a healthy condition of the soil.