

Comparative rainfall for the past eighteen years during which records have been kept by this Department is as shown hereunder:—

Year.				Rainfall for Year.	Wettest Month.	Rainfall.
				In.		In.
1918-19	..	..	..	47·30	October, 1918	9·06
1919-20	..	..	..	31·71	July, 1919	7·37
1920-21	..	..	..	53·11	May and August., 1920 (each) ..	8·02
1921-22	..	..	..	49·42	March, 1922	5·84
1922-23	..	..	..	44·81	October, 1922	7·46
1923-24	..	..	..	49·23	October, 1923	7·92
1924-25	..	..	..	48·89	May, 1924	10·34
1925-26	..	..	..	57·90	May, 1925	10·43
1926-27	..	..	..	64·91	October, 1926	9·62
1927-28	..	..	..	55·97	July, 1927	11·35
1928-29	..	..	..	58·21	June, 1928	9·13
1929-30	..	..	..	51·11	May, 1929	6·30
1930-31	..	..	..	39·27	June, 1930	7·55
1931-32	..	..	..	41·43	July, 1931	5·88
1932-33	..	..	..	37·93	February, 1933	6·35
1933-34	..	..	..	40·62	July, 1933	7·37
1934-35	..	..	..	71·97	June, 1934	9·54
1935-36	..	..	..	74·42	January, 1936	12·08

The present year is the wettest recorded, as the rainfall is 74·42 in., compared with the average rainfall over eighteen years of 51·01 in. An unusual feature of this year's rainfall is that the heaviest falls occurred in midsummer, with consequent damage to pastures not caused by winter floods of same intensity.

The rainfall for January is the highest ever recorded for any one month, and as the falls in this month and in February occurred over short periods, extensive flooding was caused. Flood-control works which were able to deal with the average rainfall which might be expected from our records have proved inadequate for the much greater rainfall, and high rate of precipitation, recorded both in this and last year.

Kaitaia township and other low-lying land in the area was inundated on several occasions during the year, and parts of the lowest country about the Tangonge Basin were under water for a sufficiently long period to destroy some good pasture which had been established in recent years.

Increased channel-capacity is required to deal with the run-off following such rainfall and rate of precipitation as has been experienced this year, and although records have not been kept for a sufficiently long period to give reliable information it is indicated that similar conditions to those experienced this year may occur frequently enough to seriously hamper the development of the Kaitaia Flats in the present condition of the outlets provided for flood-waters.

Whangatane Spillway.—Repairs to the intake were carried out to correct scour caused by flood-waters passing through this channel, but control works of a comprehensive nature are urgently required to cope with the volume of water to be dealt with here during heavy rainfalls.

Drains.—Contracts were let in March for clearing 62 miles of drains, and approximately 28 miles had been completed by the end of March. All drains are cleared in the autumn and the balance of the clearing for this year will be completed in April.

Stop-banks.—Considerable damage was done to about 10 miles of stop-bank by an abnormal tide occurring on 26th March and this is being repaired as rapidly as possible. No work had been done on these banks for some years as they were well consolidated and mostly in grass, but they will now require extensive repairs to restore to former condition.

Kaitaia River.—Frequent overtaking of this channel above the Spillway intake caused erosion of the banks so that poplar and other trees planted close to the banks have fallen into the stream, causing serious blockage. A contract was let in March for clearing 3 miles of the channel of fallen trees and this work is now being carried on by the contractor.

Plant.—No plant was in use for drainage-works, but tools and plant which could be used on small-farm areas were transferred as required.

Proposals for Ensuing Year.—Maintenance of drains and repairs to stop-banks are works to be carried on next year, and the clearing of the Kaitaia River will be completed early in the period. Some further work will also be required at the Spillway intake pending erection of a permanent structure for regulating flow of flood-waters.

As a result of the severe floods experienced in this district, as well as other portions of the Northern Peninsula, a special report on the flood position is to be prepared by the District Engineer at Whangarei and myself.

Works Expenditure.—The total expenditure for the year was £1,812 7s. 1d.

Drainage Rates.—Rates struck amounted to £5,111 7s. 7d., and £1,436 15s. 1d. was collected. A rebate of £469 10s. 2d. was allowed off capital rates.