

1937.  
NEW ZEALAND.

---

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY.

## DRAINAGE OPERATIONS IN HAURAKI PLAINS.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1937, TOGETHER WITH STATEMENTS OF ACCOUNTS.

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

---

Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, 1st August, 1937.

SIR,—

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. Frank Langstone, Minister of Lands.

### REPORT OF CHIEF DRAINAGE ENGINEER.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit the twenty-ninth annual report on the Hauraki Plains reclamation and development works. The report covers the work done during the fiscal year ending 31st March, 1937.

The settlers throughout the district have generally experienced an excellent production season, and have been encouraged by the return of more normal prices for farm-produce. Many of the difficulties experienced in the past are disappearing with the progressive development of the reclaimed swamp lands. The idea, once generally accepted, that the Hauraki Plains land is only suitable for fattening or dairying is fast disappearing as more settlers find improved security and returns in more diversified types of farming. One result of this tendency is apparent in the remarkable increase in the number of pigs disposed of during the year. The recorded pig-sale returns exceeded £50,000, and the total value of the recorded production from the Hauraki Plains, given in detail below, was approximately £771,571. These produce returns are compiled from figures kindly supplied by the large trading concerns handling most of the produce of the district, and, though the figures are by no means complete, they give an indication of the value of the asset that has been created from waste land. The production figures for 1936-37 are given below, with the 1935-36 figures shown in parentheses:—

						Tons.	Tons.
Butter	..	..	..	..	..	3,629	(3,350)
Cheese	..	..	..	..	..	2,702	(2,305)
Flax	..	..	..	..	..	825	(566½)
Lime	..	..	..	..	..	19,750	
Casein	..	..	..	..	..	107	
						Number.	Number.
Pigs	..	..	..	..	..	24,031	(9,846)
Calves	..	..	..	..	..	24,219	(24,874)
Miscellaneous stock	..	..	..	..	..	27,384	(8,205)

Cargo received and despatched from the Piako River wharves, excluding road-metal, amounted to 7,609 tons.

Reviewing the returns from the district over a period of years, the decrease in flax-production is very noticeable. This is due to several causes, including the destruction of flax on land now used for farming and the low market-value of fibre during recent years. Now that steps are being taken under the Industrial Efficiency Act to rehabilitate the flax industry, attention should be directed to the scope for development in this direction in the Hauraki Plains district. For some miles above Kaihere Landing the river-bank lands on both sides of the Piako River are more suitable