

## STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS (AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 10 OF THE RANGITAIKI LAND DRAINAGE ACT, 1910) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1914.

<i>Receipts.</i>		£ s. d.		<i>Expenditure.</i>		£ s. d.	
1st April, 1913.				31st March, 1914.			
To Balance—				By Expenditure—			
Cash in Public Account .. ..	7,914	8	2	Payments for liabilities of old Board..	8	4	2
Imprest advances.. .. .	1,684	6	3	New works by contract and day labour	11,932	8	8
8th October, 1913.				Purchase, equipment, and maintenance of dredges .. ..	5,643	5	1
Advances from State-guaranteed Advances Office .. .. .	5,000	0	0	Travelling allowance and expenses, camp allowances, and general administration expenses .. ..	289	5	7
6th March, 1914.				Balance—Cash in Public Account ..	1,835	13	10
Debentures issued under New Zealand Loans Act, 1908 .. ..	5,000	0	0				
31st March, 1913.							
“Thirds” received under section 9 of the Rangitaiki Land Drainage Act, 1910 .. .. .	110	2	11				
	<u>£19,708</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>4</u>		<u>£19,708</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>4</u>
<i>Loan Account.</i>							
31st March, 1914.		£ s. d.		31st March, 1914.		£ s. d.	
To Balance .. .. .	44,044	7	6	By Advances made by the New Zealand State-guaranteed Advances Office—			
				No. 1 Loan—Balance .. ..	24,109	7	6
				No. 2 „ „ .. ..	9,935	0	0
				No. 3 „ „ .. ..	5,000	0	0
				Debentures raised under New Zealand Loans Act, 1908 .. ..	5,000	0	0
	<u>£44,044</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>		<u>44,044</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>

SIR,—

## REPORT BY THE LAND DRAINAGE ENGINEER.

I have the honour, in accordance with the provisions of the Rangitaiki Land Drainage Act, 1910, to report on the various operations carried out during the past financial year.

This year has seen a very marked advance in the condition of the lands within this drainage district, and with the brighter prospects of still greater changes during the coming year, the future prosperity of this area becomes very apparent. Settlers right throughout the district are now happy and contented with the outlook, and in the majority of cases are settling on and improving their holdings. I think I can safely say that there is not one settler who is not at present in a position to start the breaking-in of his section, and in many cases settlers are already beginning to discard drains which have done their work of breaking-in and are now of no further use.

The amount of butter-fat produced is increasing daily. The co-operative cheese-factory on the Hallett Estate is already on a payable footing, and the butter-factories at Matata and Whakataane are also drawing increasing supplies from this district. However, for a year or two yet, until the farms become more thoroughly broken in, cattle raising and fattening will be the principal industry. It is estimated that during the past three months alone £11,000 worth of fat bullocks have been driven off. These have chiefly gone to the Auckland markets, but one shipload went as far as the freezing-works at Whangarei.

The ease with which the land is brought in and the fattening properties of the country, which is as yet only surface sown, speak volumes for the fertility of the soil and the future of the district. Land-values are moving up particularly fast, and the settlers are talking of £26 per acre for unimproved country. One of the most recent sales was a block of low-lying unimproved country at £20 10s. per acre cash. Since the inauguration of the works it is estimated that the increase in the unimproved value of the district amounts to £1,000,000—and this is a conservative estimate. This increase for a total expenditure to date of £45,000 is most gratifying, and makes these works one of the most payable propositions in New Zealand at the present day.

## DREDGERS.

The two Priestman dredgers which arrived just at the end of the last financial year, and also the Hammond bucket dredge, have been working constantly during the year. Altogether some 272,370 cubic yards of spoil has been dredged, as a cost of 3·07d. per yard. The materials dredged included all classes of soil, from peat to clay and sand, with a predominance of the latter, which with this class of plant is most difficult to dredge. The prices work out most satisfactorily, and demonstrate the suitability of the plants for all classes of works such as have to be undertaken in drainage-works of this nature. Pumping plants have had to be installed on the two Priestman dredgers in order to pass the sand through the automatic steel chufes. They are each 3 in. centrifugal pumps driven by 4 horse-power oil-engines, and, as they have already saved their cost many times over, are a valuable acquisition to the dredges.

The dredgers have been employed on the excavations for the Rangitaiki River diversion, Te Rahu-Mangaroa outfall, and in improving the Tarawera River.