

1919.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, INDUSTRIES, AND COMMERCE.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1918-19.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Excellency.

Department of Agriculture, Industries, and Commerce,
MY LORD,— Wellington, 17th September, 1919.

I have the honour to forward herewith, for Your Excellency's information, the report of the Department of Agriculture, Industries, and Commerce of the Dominion for the financial year ended the 31st March last.

I have, &c.,

W. NOSWORTHY,

Minister of Agriculture.

His Excellency the Earl of Liverpool, Governor-General of New Zealand.

REPORT OF THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE.

FOUR successive annual reports have been prefaced by references to the Great War then being fought and the relation of our agricultural industry thereto, and it may be rightly claimed that the spirit shown by the producers in support of the fighting forces overseas was a powerful factor towards the long-deferred but decisive victory since attained. War problems have now given place to peace problems, and the best ability, work, and goodwill of the country are needed for the task of meeting our liabilities without undue strain—a task which, in the main, means winning more wealth from the soil by agricultural production. With the homeward flow of manpower from the fighting fronts too early a start cannot be made in this direction.

The agricultural year under review was marked by considerable vicissitudes as regards climatic conditions. Exceptionally heavy snowfalls over wide areas occurred during the winter, while abnormally low temperatures prevailed during a greater part of the year. Several of the northern and eastern districts of the North Island experienced prolonged spells of droughty weather in the summer and late autumn. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, however, the country as a whole once more showed its splendid capacity by a heavy volume of production, and with good financial returns agriculture in general may be said to have enjoyed a prosperous year.

In regard to crops, it is pleasing to record good cereal yields in the principal grain-growing districts, especially in Canterbury, where three previous adverse