

In view of the increase in overseas travel, and so as to avoid the necessity for Departments taking numerous items in the estimates, or having recourse to "Unauthorized," the Audit Office has agreed to accept a proposal of Treasury that these grants should be charged against the general items for expenses for overseas travel, and that further details of expenses and individual grants should be supplied in footnotes to the items in the following year's estimates.

Grants made to overseas travellers are as a rule intended to be a reimbursement of personal costs such as accommodation expenses, and do not usually include locomotion expenses, which are either paid for separately or, as has happened in some cases, have been borne by other Governments. Locomotion expenses, when payable, form a substantial item in the costs of overseas visits—*e.g.*, a single air fare between New Zealand and London costs from £350 upwards and the use of air transport is increasing. These locomotion expenses should appear separately in the footnotes referred to in the preceding paragraph.

Costs of victualling Government Vessels

Opportunity was found by Audit some few months ago to investigate the cost of victualling m.v. "Maui Pomare" and s.s. "Matai." The consumption of foodstuffs in each vessel, as indicated by the figures extracted in respect of certain voyages, appeared to be unduly high, and raised much doubt as to whether such quantities could actually have been consumed on the vessels. Representations have been made to this effect to the controlling Departments. In addition, the arrangements in respect of sales of wines, spirits, and tobacco on the "Maui" appeared to be unfavourable to the Department concerned, and, as a result of the Audit inspection, the matter has been placed on a more satisfactory basis. The "Maui" is controlled by the Island Territories Department and the "Matai" by the Marine Department.

Barque "Pamir"

Reference has previously been made to the first six voyages of the "Pamir," which is managed by the Union Steam Ship Co., Ltd., on behalf of the Government. Voyage accounts for the seventh and eighth voyages, which were prepared by the Marine Department and are merely statements of disbursements and receipts, show a profit of £3,091 and a loss of £17,787 respectively. The following is a summary of the accounts:—

Wellington to Vancouver and Return

—	Voyage 7 : 22/9/45 to 13/3/46.	Voyage 8 : 5/5/46 to 1/10/46.	—	Voyage 7.		Voyage 8.	
				Receipts.	Cargo.	Receipts.	Cargo.
Disbursements ..	£ 24,533	£ 37,005	Freight north ..	£ 5,800	£ Tallow.	£ 5,491	£ Tallow.
Excess receipts over payments	3,091	..	Freight south ..	21,824	Wheat.	13,727	Coal.
			Excess payments over receipts	..	..	17,787	
	27,624	37,005		27,624		37,005	