

PART IV.—OTHER DEPARTMENTAL ACTIVITIES

SECTION 1.—ACCOUNTS SECTION

As was the case last year, the accounting functions of the Department have covered both the departmental accounting and that relating to the clearing-up of Ministry of Supply activities.

Details of this Department's expenditure are published in the Estimates, so it is not thought necessary to restate them here. This opportunity is taken, however, to give particulars of the transaction involving £705,925 for the purchase of cement-bags. This covered ten million paper bags from France for use by the fertilizer and cement manufacturers because supplies of jute bags from India were inadequate and deliveries uncertain. The full consignment of French bags has been sold to the manufacturers at landed cost.

Transactions concerning the Ministry of Supply fall into the following main classifications. There are those which relate to deliveries coming to hand from overseas under orders placed by the Ministry, those which relate to sales of stocks, those which relate to the clearing of debtors' balances, and those which relate to the supply of goods to the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA).

In the year 1947-48, 1,247 consignments, valued at £1,472,896, were received on 110 vessels. In the previous year 4,000 consignments, valued at more than £9,000,000, were received on 146 vessels.

As a consequence of the disposal of stocks during the year, stores occupied were reduced from five in April, 1947, to three in March, 1948. Stores still occupied include two at Aotea Quay, Wellington, and one at Lyttelton. Disposals made have included surplus equipment taken over from the Munitions Controller, and for the year were of an aggregate value of £1,125,897. Among matters taken over from the Munitions Controller and dealt with were the dismantling of the small-arms ammunition plant at Hamilton and its transfer into storage at Auckland.

Expenditure charged to War Expenses Account (Civil Division) on account of Ministry of Supply for the past year totalled £2,742,815. In this amount £414,196 is in respect of purchases on behalf of UNRRA. Revenue received under this heading totalled £3,851,951. The excess of revenue over expenditure arises, firstly, from the liquidation of stocks and, secondly, from the realization of debtors' balances.

Purchases on behalf of other Governments or of international organizations have been finalized in the cases of the Netherlands East Indies, the United Kingdom on behalf of Far Eastern Territories, and UNRRA. In the case of UNRRA, after fulfilling all requests for supplies and providing for contingent expenditure, a credit balance of £96,814 remains from New Zealand's contribution of £5,200,000, which is now being paid to UNRRA in sterling.

Buying on a Government-to-Government basis similar to that followed by the Ministry of Supply remains in operation in respect of tinplate, tin, ingot tin, electrical black sheet, and sisal.

SECTION 2.—LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICE

(a) LIBRARY

During the year the departmental library has again been used extensively as a source of reference and assistance to officers of the Department, manufacturers, and industry generally. Inquiries received by the Department arising from material published in the Department's *Industrial Bulletin*, which is issued in collaboration with the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, continue to increase, and direct inquiries received arising from abstracts published in this *Bulletin* totalled 3,200 during the year.