

The whole loss was borne by the Imperial Government except as to scheelite, which was insured on behalf of the producers.

The s.s. "Matatua," mentioned above, was injured as the result of an explosion and a subsequent stranding, and is at present undergoing repairs preparatory to being made again available for the New Zealand trade.

As a set-off against the losses a small amount of new tonnage has been added to the fleet engaged in the frozen-meat trade, and fifteen steamers up to the present have been made available temporarily from Australia.

The continuation of war has accentuated the difficulty of satisfactorily solving the question of providing sufficient shipping facilities to meet the Dominion's requirements, and has necessitated distributing the shipment of requisitioned produce over longer periods. Nevertheless good progress has been made in the abnormal and trying circumstances, and, as the foregoing figures under their respective headings show, enormous quantities of meat, wool, cheese, and other cargo with which the Department was concerned have been despatched and have reached their destination.

Owing to a strike of coal-miners in New Zealand, which occurred immediately after the Easter holidays of this year, a number of steamers were held up for want of coal.

The following statement will show the number of insulated steamers and their total carrying-capacity which have sailed from the Dominion during the three years 1914, 1915, and 1916, with an appendix showing similar information covering the period 1st January to the 31st May in each of the years mentioned and this year :—

1914.		1915.		1916.	
Number of Steamers.	Total Insulated Capacity. 60 lb. Carcases.	Number of Steamers.	Total Insulated Capacity. 60 lb. Carcases.	Number of Steamers.	Total Insulated Capacity. 60 lb. Carcases.
*99	8,800,700	84	7,682,000	78	7,322,500

* Including 8 steamers used as transports for New Zealand Expeditionary Force in October, 1914, only a small portion of the insulated capacities of which was available for New Zealand produce.

From 1st January to 31st May.

1914.		1915.		1916.		1917.	
Number of Steamers.	Total Insulated Capacity. 60 lb. Carcases.	Number of Steamers.	Total Insulated Capacity. 60 lb. Carcases.	Number of Steamers.	Total Insulated Capacity. 60 lb. Carcases.	Number of Steamers.	Total Insulated Capacity. 60 lb. Carcases.
49	4,415,100	37	3,409,000	33	3,163,000	31	2,918,500

DOMINION EXIGENCIES: SUPPLIES FOR THE GOVERNMENT.

As previously stated, the Department of Imperial Government Supplies has not confined its energies solely to the purchase and despatch of produce requisitioned on behalf of the Imperial Government. Its organization has been utilized by the Dominion Government for the purchase of supplies for the New Zealand military camps and transports. In co-operation with the Dairy Division of the Department of Agriculture, the Department has purchased for the Military Supplies Department, to the 31st March, 1917, 461,256 lb. of butter at an average of 15·94d. per pound, amounting to £30,644, and 3,176 crates of cheese, amounting to £17,484.