

1919.
NEW ZEALAND.

MUNITIONS AND SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT.

REPORT BY MINISTER IN CHARGE; ALSO, REPORT ON ACTIVITIES OF
COAL-CONTROL DEPARTMENT.

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.

THE last report is dated 30th September, 1918, and owing to the signing of the Armistice in November of that year, and the Department closing down on the 31st March last, this present report is more in the nature of a conclusion than a report of the Department's activities.

The purchases made by the Department during the last six months of its operations amounted to £160,998, made up as follows:—

	£
(a.) Stores	95,498
(b.) Supplies	59,715
(c.) Drugs	5,785
Total	<u>£160,998</u>

and this amount has been distributed throughout the Dominion as under:—

	£
(a.) Auckland	21,517
(b.) Wellington	113,511
(c.) Canterbury	13,562
(d.) Otago	12,408
Total	<u>£160,998</u>

The amount thus expended, added to the aggregate of my last report, brings the total expenditure of the Department up to, in round figures, £4,500,000, or an average of £1,300,000 per annum for three years and a half; and it is satisfactory to note that throughout the many transactions involved in the expenditure of this large sum no case of fraud has arisen, although in the early stages of the Department's existence it was necessary in a few instances to inflict fines where contractors had not carried out deliveries in accordance with specifications. This expenditure of four and a half millions covers, besides many imported lines, the following goods, which have all been produced or manufactured in the Dominion:—

Foodstuffs, &c.—Fresh meat, 10,840,000 lb.; bread, 2,187,000 lb.; sugar, 6,030,000 lb.; flour, 9,020,000 lb.; butter, 4,150,000 lb.; jam, 3,469,000 lb.; cheese, 1,867,600 lb.; oatmeal, 1,255,000 lb.; fresh milk, 764,700 gallons; candles, 252,000 lb.

Forage.—Oats, 170,000 sacks; chaff, 2,975 tons; straw, 2,396 tons; hay, 1,368 tons; bran, 396 tons.

Equipment.—Socks, 364,000 tons; undershirts, 294,200; underpants, 287,000, blankets, 274,000; working-shirts, 249,000; boots, 232,000; trousers, 216,000; jackets, 213,100; puttees, 139,600; hats, 133,700; greatcoats, 120,000; jerseys, 106,000; cholera-belts, 100,000; "housewives," 99,000; shoes, 97,200; puggarees, 88,000; forage-caps, 83,000; pantaloons, 27,500; jerkins, 13,400.

Towards the end of 1918, when the position of military stocks was fully reviewed, it was found that the Defence Department had no surplus clothing or stores to dispose of; however,