

Contributions of the public to various overseas relief funds are as follow :—

	For the Year ended 31st March, 1919.	For the Period since Outbreak of the War.
	£	£
Belgian Relief Funds	37,599	348,720
Other Belgian Funds	310	6,746
For other Allies	15,874	38,231
Civil relief in Great Britain	2,942	14,729
British Red Cross Fund	142,379	329,801
British Navy Relief Fund	13,183	111,421
New Zealand Hospital Ship Fund	1,276	65,023
New Zealand Comforts Fund	50,393	178,670
New Zealand War Relief Fund	475	16,455
For equipment of aeroplanes, ambulances, &c.	1,418	10,821
For regimental funds	1,016	3,752
For local War Funds	184	7,824
For sundry overseas funds	12,249	13,726
Total voluntary subscriptions	279,298	1,145,919
Government contribution to Belgian Relief Funds	..	228,145
Grand total	279,298	1,374,064

The general receipts for overseas relief funds are less than they were for the previous year, except for the British Red Cross Fund and the British Navy Relief Fund, in aid of which special collections were taken up during the year.

The cessation of hostilities has enabled the funds raised for Belgian and Allied relief to be set free, and as a result remittances overseas in connection therewith have been increased by £54,000, and only a comparatively small amount of the funds so raised now remains to be remitted.

MUNITIONS AND SUPPLIES.

Owing to the cessation of hostilities with Germany, the activities of the Munitions and Supplies Department were duly brought to a close on the 31st March, 1919. Up to this time the total expenditure by the Department in procuring stores for military purposes amounted to approximately four and a half millions sterling, the whole of this sum, representing an annual expenditure of £1,300,000, being handled without a single case of fraud, although at the beginning of the Department's activities it had been found necessary to inflict fines where specifications had not been faithfully carried out, amounting in one case to £2,000.

When the Armistice was signed the Department was committed to incomplete contracts to the value of £145,000. Owing to the fact that a clause had been inserted in the contracts giving the Department the right to terminate by taking over materials, these commitments were cancelled, at a total cost by way of compensation amounting to £112, and by taking over from the contractors goods useful to the military authorities to the value of £32,000. A surplus stock of consumable goods to the value of £9,588 was disposed of at a net loss on cost of £2,772.

It is satisfactory to record that the cost of administering the Munitions and Supplies Department amounted in round figures to £18,000, being an average annual cost of £5,000. In this connection it is well to remember that the economy in expenditure has been due largely to valuable services rendered gratuitously by the advisers and experts who patriotically placed their services at the disposal of the Minister in charge.

PRIORITY PERMITS.

With the signing of the Armistice came the lifting of all export restrictions imposed during the war period by the authorities in the United Kingdom, Canada, United States of America, India, and Australia.