

preference of shipment over meat killed subsequent to the 30th June, 1920. The Imperial Government also assumes ownership of the frozen meat after it has been in store six weeks, and provision is made for the payment of an advance of 75 per cent., the balance of 25 per cent. being paid when shipment is effected.

The requisition of sheep-skins commenced on the 5th February, 1917, and since that date to the 31st March, 1919, 4,082,415 skins have been purchased and distributed to fellmongers for treatment.

During the term of the requisition of hides, which ceased on the 28th March, 1918, 370,508 hides were purchased. These figures include hides obtained from killings to the 28th March and valued at a subsequent date.

The 1918-19 greasy-wool clip was purchased by the Imperial authorities on the same conditions as for the previous year, and since the commencement of the wool requisition in December, 1916, the total quantity of greasy wool paid for amounted to 1,518,591 bales, valued at £36,814,755. In addition, since the 31st March, 1917, 68,959 bales of freezing companies' slipe wool have been purchased for valuation in the United Kingdom, and 63,201 bales have been purchased under New Zealand valuations, the payments to date totalling £3,660,957.

The allotment of scouring-wool during the 1918-19 season was more than double the quantity scoured annually prior to the inception of the requisition, the increase having been made in accordance with the instructions of the Imperial Government to save shipping-space. Satisfaction has been expressed by the Imperial Government at the quality of the work carried out by the New Zealand wool-scourers.

The conditions for purchase of the 1918-19 season's output of cheese were similar to those obtaining during previous years, the price being fixed at 10½d. per pound f.o.b. for first-grade cheese, and 10½d. per pound f.o.b. for second-grade cheese. The cost of storage was to be paid by the Imperial Government if the cheese remained in store over an average period of two months. 217,937 crates of this season's cheese were shipped to the 31st March, 1919, whilst the shipments since the inception of the requisition on the 4th November, 1915, total 1,677,628 crates, and total payments £12,738,052. The arrangements for purchase provided for the payment of an advance of approximately 90 per cent. after the cheese had remained in grading-store over a period of fourteen days, and payment of the balance on shipment.

The purchase price for the 1918-19 and following season's butter-output was fixed at 181s. per hundredweight for first-grade creamery butter. The price for second-grade was arrived at by a deduction of 6d. per hundredweight for each half grade-point by which the butter fell below first-grade. Whey, dairy, and milled butter was also included in the purchase at relatively reduced prices. 647,139 boxes of this season's butter have been shipped. From the commencement of the requisition operations (20th November, 1917) to the 31st March, 1919, the shipment of butter totalled 1,371,296 boxes, and payments £5,651,619.

The purchase of scheelite commenced on the 20th September, 1915, and to the 31st March, 1919, 690 tons were shipped, valued at £135,213.

Under the terms of the requisition the Imperial Government contracted to purchase all scheelite produced in the Dominion during the period of the war and for six months thereafter, but in March, 1919, the Imperial Government intimated its intention to cancel the contracts for scheelite from all parts of the Empire, and to accept only that shipped to the 30th April, 1919. It was proposed to take this action in view of the fact that stocks in the United Kingdom and afloat were sufficient for requirements for a period of eighteen months, and the Ministry was of opinion that if contracts were continued and production thus stimulated, stocks would accumulate to such an extent that the position at the expiration of the contract would have the effect of completely closing the Home market to Empire producers. The Imperial authorities promised that full consideration would be given to claims for losses resulting from the cancellation of the contract, and proposed that producers' claims for compensation should be based on the probable production of scheelite for the duration of the war and for six months thereafter, and the probable profit per ton which would have accrued had the estimated production above referred to been obtained. This offer was submitted to the producers who expressed the opinion that the specific performance of the contract was the only course to be adopted which would operate fairly in the producers' interests, in view