

SCHEELITE.

The contract for the purchase of scheelite by the Imperial Government, which commenced on the 20th September, 1915, was determined on the 30th April, 1919, and the Imperial Ministry of Munitions agreed to pay compensation on the basis of 50 per cent. of the deliveries during the preceding twelve months, or, in certain cases, on the estimated production during the six months following the date mentioned above.

The total compensation distributed to the various producers concerned amounted to £19,128.

The total quantity of scheelite shipped under the terms of the contract amounts to 774 tons, and the payments, inclusive of the compensation referred to above, amount to £175,970, distributed to various districts as under :—

	£
Glenorchy.. .. .	87,713
Macrae's Flat	38,063
Otago Central	7,416
Marlborough	34,077
Charges	8,701
	£175,970

Final accounts in respect of the last shipment to leave New Zealand have not yet been received from London.

TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS.

The total disbursements by the Department from the 3rd March, 1915, to the 31st March, 1920, were as follows :—

	£
Frozen meat	44,344,503
Cheese	19,106,866
Butter	8,143,100
Scheelite	175,970
Wool	49,600,913
Freezing companies' slipe wool	5,880,344
Sheep-skins	2,573,155
Hides	735,663
Miscellaneous	2,530,726
Grand total	£133,091,240

The salaries, postages, cables, telegrams, office expenses, rent, stationery, and all other incidental charges connected with the internal administration of the Department since its inception to the 31st March, 1920, have amounted to £63,497 0s. 10d., representing 0·0477 per cent. on above disbursements, or less than one shilling for each £100 of business done.

SHIPPING.

As forecasted in my last report, the shipping position has improved during the past year, and, so far as provision for general cargo has been concerned, the number of steamers available has very considerably reduced the quantity of cargo awaiting shipment.

Insulated tonnage has been provided in increased quantity, but, owing to congestion at ports in the United Kingdom causing delays in discharging at that end, the stocks of frozen meat have not been reduced sufficiently to enable freezing-works to cope with all the fat stock offering.

Urgent efforts have been made during the year to have the quantity of insulated space allotted to New Zealand increased, and in consequence vessels have been transferred from the South American and Australian trade to relieve stocks in the Dominion.