

The Department has continued to make advances on the basis of approximately 90 per cent. of the purchase price in respect of butter and cheese remaining in grading-store over a period of fourteen days.

The contracts with the Imperial Government for the purchase of the exportable surplus of butter and cheese terminate in respect of produce manufactured during the periods ending 31st July and 1st July, 1920, respectively.

Equalization payments have been made from the sum of £340,000 authorized by section 16, Appropriation Act, 1919, in respect of the 1918-19 and 1919-20 seasons' butter, for the purpose of equalizing the profits of those manufacturers who supply creamery butter for local consumption and those who supply butter for export under the scheme of requisition.

SCHEELITE.

The scheelite contract 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 approximately £19,000. The total quantity of scheelite shipped under the terms of the contract amounts to 774 tons.

TOTAL PAYMENTS.

The total payments made by the Department from the 3rd March, 1915, to the 31st March, 1920, amounted to £133,091,240, made up as under:—

	£
Frozen meat	44,344,503
Cheese	19,106,866
Butter	8,143,100
Scheelite	175,970
Wool	55,481,257
Sheep-skins	2,573,155
Hides	735,663
Other business	2,530,726

WESTERN SAMOA.

After much delay, due to causes quite beyond the control of this Dominion, we received authority to pass the Samoa Constitution and other necessary supplementary orders which make laws for the peace, order, and good government of New Zealand's mandated territory, and these came into operation in Western Samoa on the 1st May, 1920. On that date, therefore, Civil Government and British law replaced the Military Administration and German law of the preceding five years and a half.

Honourable members will recollect that during the debate on the Treaties of Peace Act last session I promised them an opportunity to visit our new possession and thus by personal inspection and investigation to acquire a first-hand knowledge of Samoan affairs generally, and particularly of the special problems confronting the new Civil Administration. The steamship "Mokoia" was accordingly chartered for the trip, and she left Wellington on the 17th February with a large number of members representing both branches of the Legislature, arriving back at Auckland on the 26th March. The itinerary included calls at the Cook Group (Raratonga, Mangaia, and Aitutaki), Niue, Eastern and Western Samoa (Pago Pago, Apia, and Savaii), Tonga (Vavau and Nukualofa), and Fiji (Suva and Lautoka).