

TOTAL PAYMENTS.

The total payments made by the Department from the 3rd March, 1915, to the 31st March, 1921, amounted to £158,576,644, as follow:—

	£
Wool	60,407,888
Sheep-skins	3,279,499
Frozen meat	53,039,535
Cheese	21,160,884
Butter	16,571,130
Hides	741,208
Scheelite	178,481
Other business	3,198,019
	<hr/>
	£158,576,644
	<hr/>

WESTERN SAMOA.

Civil government has been in operation in Western Samoa since the 1st May, 1920, although the mandate, as explicitly defined and confirmed by the Council of the League of Nations at its first assembly at Geneva, only reached the Dominion in April last. The mandate for Western Samoa does not differ in any respect from the principles embodied in the Treaty of Peace. It is now possible to make permanent provision for the government of the mandated territory, and the proposed legislation to take the place of the present Samoa Constitution Supplementary Orders has been circulated.

I regret that the meeting of the Imperial Conference at London prevented me from visiting Samoa during the recess and meeting the Samoan and European residents, but I will take the first opportunity that offers to pay my promised visit. The Minister of External Affairs recently paid a visit to the Group, and was impressed with the progress that has been made since the visit of the parliamentary party in March, 1920, notwithstanding the great difficulty experienced during this period in obtaining labour and supplies of all kinds. Many important questions affecting the Administration and the Crown estates were discussed with the Administrator and his officials, and settled during the visit. The Minister of External Affairs hopes to lay on the table this session a copy of the first report on Western Samoa, to be sent to the Council of the League of Nations pursuant to Article 6 of the mandate.

I regret to say that the sudden collapse of the copra and cocoa markets about December last, and the subsequent stagnation of trade, have seriously affected the revenues of the Samoan Treasury and Samoan Crown Estates Account for the current financial year. Fortunately, the copra-market is steadily recovering, and the future, therefore, can be faced with confidence.

With the advent of civil administration the New Zealand Government approved a programme of public-works services and utilities, at a total estimated capital cost of £160,400, to be spread over a period of five years. This total comprises (a) productive works, £104,250, and (b) non-productive works, £56,150. It was intended to provide the whole of the sum required out of the accumulated funds of the Crown Estates, but the collapse of the markets already referred to has forced the Crown Estates Department to fall back on these funds to meet wages and other current expenses. These expenses include the cost of coolie transport, which, however, is recoverable by regular instalments spread over the contract periods. It may be necessary, therefore, this year to assist the Samoan Treasury by a loan to meet the expenditure on account of productive works. This money will be made available as required in accordance with the loan provisions of the Samoan Constitution Order.

COOK ISLANDS.

Mr. J. G. L. Hewitt, S.M., was appointed to succeed Mr. Platts as Resident Commissioner at Rarotonga, and took up duties in February.

The trade and revenue of the islands during the year has been satisfactory.