

inspection, enabled many to appreciate the power of the great Service of which those ships form a part, and to which New Zealand has so recently owed the preservation of its trade and commerce during war. In one ship of the Squadron, the light cruiser "Dunedin," New Zealand has a special interest, since that vessel, of the most modern design, has been selected by the Admiralty to replace the "Chatham" in the New Zealand Division of the Royal Navy. I was also glad, with my Ministers, to welcome the presence in the Squadron of the "Adelaide," one of the ships of the Royal Australian Navy. The subsequent voyage of the Squadron along the coasts of the Western Samoan Islands, and its stay for a time off Apia, has afforded great satisfaction to my Ministers and to the Administration of the Islands. It was of special importance that the Natives of Samoa should have the opportunity thus provided for them.

The British Empire Exhibition at Wembley, recently opened by His Majesty, is attracting great numbers of visitors not only from the people of Great Britain but also from all the territories of the Empire. The principal object of the Exhibition—to provide specimens of the products of the various parts of the Empire for the inspection of those interested in the relative trades—will be completely served so far as this Dominion is concerned by the efforts of our country to ensure a complete exhibit of its products; and my Ministers have reason to hope that the financial results will not disappoint the Governments who have rendered themselves responsible for the large expense involved. My Ministers availed themselves of the voluntary services of a number of gentlemen in New Zealand who agreed to act as an Advisory Council. The Dominion is much indebted to those gentlemen for the interest they showed and the care and attention they gave to ensure the full representation of our principal industries. On their advice Mr. A. F. Roberts was appointed New Zealand Commissioner to the Exhibition.

The British Nationality and Status of Aliens in New Zealand Act of your last session, which was reserved for His Majesty's assent, has recently received the Royal approval and has become part of the law of New Zealand, and is also now operative under our mandatory authority in Western Samoa.

Very satisfactory progress has been made for the Relief of Discharged Soldier Settlers by the Dominion Board established by the legislation of last session. With the assistance of the District Revaluation Committees the Board has been able to consider a very large number of applications, and my Ministers trust it will be found that the process of revaluation and reduction of rent and interest, and, in some cases, of capital, will enable the majority of our discharged soldiers settled on the land to look forward to success with renewed hope. It has for some time been recognized that the main difficulty arises in cases where the land was purchased by the soldiers themselves from private individuals, with a first mortgage to the Crown for its advance, and subsidiary mortgages to the vendors. In a number of instances of this class the Board has been able to effect satisfactory arrangements as between the mortgagor and the second mortgagee. The policy established by the Act, together with the approaching termination of the general mortgages extension, necessitated the increase (provided by your Act of last session) of the maximum amount permitted under the State Advances Act from £2,000 to £3,500 for settlers, and from £750 to £1,250 for workers, and the increase by £2,250,000 of the authorization of loan for advances to settlers and workers. Applications for advances have been received far in excess of the increased authorization. The success of the efforts of the State Advances Department to cope with the increased demand is exemplified by the fact that during the financial year ended the 31st March loans to the amount of £8,066,202 were authorized, and £6,205,686 actually paid. Further moneys are being supplied to the Office, and constant effort is maintained to deal speedily with all applications.