

## SELLING LINOLEUM GRADES ON A GUM-CONTENT BASIS.

During the past year a number of manufacturers abroad refused to buy linoleum grades unless a specified gum content was guaranteed. As a result the testing of low grades for gum content has been given more attention than previously. The exporters are now freely making tests of the soluble-resin content of purchases and shipments. The tests are usually made with acetone or alcohol, although the MacLaurin salt-vacuum test is also used. Since linoleum grades are exported with resin contents ranging from 30 or 40 per cent. to as high as 90 per cent. or more, it is difficult to understand why sales have not been made on a gum-content basis all along. At all events it seems quite safe to assume that for the future the exporter will both buy and sell using the gum content as a basis when fixing prices, and it is equally certain that it will be for the good of all concerned.

## THE ALLOCATION OF GOVERNMENT GRANTS FOR THE PURCHASE OF GUM.

During the year all Government purchases of gum have been in the way of relieving distress on the gumfields, and gum has only been taken when no other buyers were operating and the diggers found it impossible to make a sale elsewhere. It was out of the question for the Government to attempt to buy all the gum offering, and it was not always possible to find sufficient funds to buy some gum from each digger wishing to make a sale. It therefore remained for the Department to try and allocate the money to the best advantage.

At all times there has existed a difficulty of deciding which diggers are most pressed and should receive preference. Early in the year in several districts the committees formed to go into the question of a board of control asked that a favourable recommendation should be received from the local committee before any particular digger participated in the funds available for the purchase of gum. It was suggested that the members of the committees and their wives and friends were in a much better position to know the financial position of the diggers than the Government buyer. There was also the fact that in many cases the more independent of the diggers would not unduly press their claims to the Government buyer, whereas they would, in the case of a committee of fellow-diggers, go into their financial position and make the best of their cases.

The various committees, in offering their services, quite understood the extremely unpleasant and unpopular task they were undertaking. It is, of course, quite impossible to please every one, and the disappointed diggers at times offer their opinions on the subject very freely.

This method of allocating the funds was put into effect. The procedure is for the district committees to be advised of the amount available in any particular month. Diggers who wish to make sales send in their names to the committee, and, so far as funds permit, the money available is allotted to the most deserving cases on the basis of the number of dependents. The list is then handed to the Government buyer, who purchases gum to the amount shown on the list from each person named. Of course, the allocation of the money by the committee is not binding on the Department, and the digger, if he so chooses, can refuse to accept the prices offered by the Government buyer. This method of making purchases of gum has been given a good trial and has been found very satisfactory. Very few complaints have been received, and in no case has it been found necessary to interfere with the recommendations of the various committees. The activities of the committee for the Houhora-Waihopo district call for special mention. A very large number of diggers are still working on the fields in that district, and outside buyers have been operating to only a very slight extent. At all times during the year the diggers have only been able to sell small lots of gum, and in allotting the various grants the committee has had an exceedingly difficult task and one which has been carried out in a very satisfactory and businesslike manner.

## GENERAL.

The question of the best method of control of the kauri-gum industry has received a good deal of attention during the year, and legislation is pending having for its object the improvement of conditions in certain respects. There is no intention of interfering in any way with the established exporters, or of restricting output, or altering the gradings of gum as now exported; but it will probably be found possible to effect improvements in the marketing of the gum by the diggers, and generally to stabilize the industry.

H. J. LOWE,  
Kauri-gum Superintendent.

## KAURI-GUM INDUSTRY ACCOUNT.

## RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1925.

<i>Receipts.</i>	£	s.	d.	<i>Payments.</i>	£	s.	d.
Cash in Public Account, 1st April, 1924 .. .. .	6,968	0	7	Wages to workmen and gum-buyers .. .. .	1,830	6	1
Sales of gum .. .. .	15,335	19	1	Plant, machinery, stores, &c. .. .. .	571	2	8
Miscellaneous receipts .. .. .	265	0	11	Purchases of gum .. .. .	11,101	5	8
				Freight, cartage, &c. .. .. .	2,160	14	6
				General expenses .. .. .	1,062	4	11
				Interest on debentures .. .. .	3,275	0	0
				Sinking fund .. .. .	133	12	11
				Cash in Public Account, 31st March, 1925	2,434	13	10
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	£22,569	0	7		£22,569	0	7
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