

WOOL.

It is pleasing to note, in contrast to the declining markets above referred to, that the price of New Zealand wool has been steadily advancing with each sale. As indicated in the cablegrams that have been so frequently despatched from this office, prices generally have been firmer, and the demand satisfactory. The Americans have been keen competitors for all suitable lots offered for their requirements. Indications point to a continuance of satisfactory business being done by manufacturers and of a good demand at payable prices.

EXHIBITIONS.

During the year opportunity was found for special advertisement by taking part in two of the several fruit-shows organized by the Royal Horticultural Society. At the first, held in June, exhibits of apples—both cooking and dessert—and pears, together with bottled fruit, were made; while at the second, held in December, exhibits of apples, bottled fruits, jams, and honey were shown.

On both occasions the displays made on behalf of the Dominion were excellent, and were favourably commented upon by all who saw them. Gold, silver, and bronze medals were awarded to the exhibits. Full reports regarding these shows were forwarded to the Department at Wellington.

PUBLICATIONS.

A regular supply of both the *New Zealand Farmer* and *Dairyman* has been received from Wellington during the year, and these have been widely circulated—the former amongst public reading-rooms in country districts, and the latter amongst grocers' and other associations connected with the dairy-produce trade.

A large amount of literature dealing with the frozen-meat industry has also been distributed during the year.

I have, &c.,

H. C. CAMERON,

Produce Commissioner.

The High Commissioner for New Zealand, London.

APPENDIX III.

PRÉCIS OF REPORT ON KAURI-GUM DATED 17TH NOVEMBER, 1908.

1. DURING my visit to the fields I interviewed the majority of the wholesale gum-buyers, exporters, and various brokers in Auckland, the storekeepers on the fields, the executive members of the Auckland Gum-diggers' Union of Workers, and several of its branches, and, in short, every one I thought could throw any light on the industry.

2. *Number of Men employed in the Industry.*—Approximately about five thousand legitimate diggers, including Austrians. By "legitimate diggers" is meant those whose living is made exclusively by digging. There are also about three or four thousand casual diggers.

The Average Quantity of Gum obtained and put on the Market per Month.—Taking last return—that for September, 1908—555 tons was produced and marketed. This is the lowest return for ten years for September month, except in 1901, when the quantity was 498 tons. There is a general falling-off compared with last year of 25 to 30 per cent.; compared with ten years ago, about 40 per cent. This year the average monthly production has been 495 tons.

3. *Prices paid to the Diggers for the Different Qualities of Gum.*—According to a report supplied to me by Mr. Samuel Stafford, secretary of the Waipu Branch of the Auckland Gum-diggers' Industrial Union of Workers, the prices received by the diggers for the different qualities of gum are as follows:—

At Waipu, Ruakaka, and vicinity,—

	Per Cwt.	
	s.	s.
Superior ordinary, termed "three-quarters scraped"	90	112
Fair ordinary	50	60
Washed nuts	35	40
Chips and dust	12	14
Three-quarters scraped, termed "steel"	70	85
Ordinary to fair, half-scraped	40	50
Poor ordinary, rough sorts	25	35
Sugary sorts	15	20
Chips and dust	6	12
Washed nuts, swampy white and black		10

NOTE.—Sometimes the diggers resrape and class the "superior ordinary" mentioned above, the new grade being valued at from 120s. to 200s. per hundredweight according to the degree of cleaning and quality. The paleness and clearness of the gum and the quantity in the sample fix its price.