

Shipments from the above and from selections made during the previous year have been made as follows :—

France	..	..	..	..	49,207 bales.
United States of America	..	..	..	..	44,373 „
Canada	..	..	..	..	21,738 „

The prices charged for these shipments were arranged by the Imperial Government.

The selections for Canada and the balance of selections for France and America were subsequently cancelled, and the wool held for shipment to the United Kingdom.

WOOL FOR LOCAL MILLS.

The Department has also arranged for the continuance of the supply of wool required by local mills, and this has been supplied at the Imperial Government schedule rates, plus the cost of valuation.

The representatives of New Zealand woollen-mills are required to make their selections prior to valuation, and in the case of any dispute arising as between two mills preference is given to the one which has first intimated its requirements to the broker concerned.

WOOL-SCOURING ARRANGEMENTS.

The arrangements made for scouring locks, pieces, lambs, and heavy conditioned fleece wool were continued as in previous years.

For the 1916-17 season to the 31st October, 1917, 80,951 bales, and for the 1917-18 season from the 1st November, 1917, to the 31st October, 1918, 107,739 bales, of wool were distributed to scourers for treatment; and for the portion of the 1918-19 season from the 1st November, 1918, to the 31st March, 1919, 93,320 bales of wool had been distributed to wool-scourers or set aside for subsequent scouring.

This continued increase has been by the instructions of the Imperial Government to save shipping-space, and also as a direct result of the satisfaction expressed by the Imperial Government at the quality of the work carried out by wool-scourers.

The quantity of wool now scoured in the Dominion is more than double the quantity scoured annually under private trading. The credit for the satisfactory work performed is largely due to the great care and attention given by the Inspectors of Wool-scouring works, and also to wool-scourers, who have improved their plant and methods to the requirements of the Department.

Scourers were required to sort, classify, scour, dry, and pack the wool to be treated by them, and their remuneration was fixed at the following scale: 1½d. per pound for fleece on scoured weights; 1¾d. per pound for bellies, locks, stained pieces, and second pieces on scoured weights; with ¼d. per pound advance in each case for merino wool; and payment for such charges is made within fourteen days on receipt by the Department of Imperial Government Supplies, provided the inspectors' and valuers' certificates required are properly completed.

The result of scouring for 1917-18 season showed that 108,682 bales greasy wool, of an average weight of 378.39 lb., equal to 41,124,629 lb., were reduced to 91,631 bales scoured wool, of an average weight of 291.33 lb., equal to 26,694,456 lb.—a saving in shipping-space required of 17,051 bales and 14,430,173 lb. weight.

The average yield of scoured wool was 64.91 lb. per 100 lb. of greasy wool.

The amount paid to wool-scourers for treatment of this wool was £192,933 18s. 11d.

CONDITION OF 1918-19 CLIP.

Auckland.—While the wool in this district came forward in good condition, the clip did not show the length and character of the previous season. It was less affected by seed than usually, except at the later valuations. Indifferent skirting and poor classification are the chief causes of complaint.

Poverty Bay (including Tolaga Bay and Tokomaru Bay).—Complaint is general *re* the indifferent skirting and classing of the clips throughout the whole of this district.

Gisborne.—There was a slight improvement in the character and condition of the clip as compared to the previous season, but no marked and outstanding lines