

Scourers were required to sort, classify, scour, dry, and pack the wool treated by them, and their remuneration was fixed at the following scale: Fleece, $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. per pound on scoured weight: bellies, locks, stained pieces, and second pieces, $1\frac{3}{4}$ d. per pound on scoured weight; merino, $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per pound advance on above.

Owing to the heavy increased cost of labour and material an increase in the scale was granted for the 1919-20 season of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per pound on wool of 48/50's quality and upwards, and $\frac{1}{8}$ d. per pound on lower grades.

The result of scouring for 1918-19 season showed that 121,064 bales greasy wool at an average weight of 374.21 lb., equal to 45,297,123 lb., were reduced to 100,011 bales scoured wool of an average weight of 297.70 lb., equal to 29,772,652 lb. — a saving in shipping space of 21,053 bales and 15,524,471 lb. weight.

The average yield of scoured wool was 66.27 lb. per 100 lb. of greasy wool.

The amount paid to wool-scourers for treatment of this wool was £213,369.

CONDITION OF 1919-20 CLIP.

The condition of the 1919-20 clip as reported by the Chief Supervising Wool-valuer at the 31st January, was as follows:—

Auckland.—Auckland wool is not quite as well grown as in the previous season, but the condition is good, with a tendency to be a shade finer. Very little seedy wool has been submitted to valuation up to the present.

Poverty Bay and Hawke's Bay. The growth of the clip generally has suffered from the effects of the drought conditions, wools coming in shorter in staple, with a decided break. The condition of the wools valued up to date has been dry and generally satisfactory, there being no excess of yolk. Many of the clips were a little dull and dusty. There is no change to note in the character of the wools except that there is a large proportion of "hunger fine" wools, and in much of the clip the effect of the shortage of feed is emphasized by a half-perished and rough tip to the wool.

The southern portion of the Hawke's Bay and Wairoa do not appear to have suffered so much as the rest of the district, and many of the wools from these parts have been well grown and light in condition. Lambs' wool generally has been short in staple and not nearly up to the standard of good seasons.

Wellington. Owing to the very dry autumn the wool this season is short and shows a good deal of tenderness. There has been a very marked absence of seedy wool this season. The lambs' wool is better than an average season's, being bright and clean and free from seed.

Wanganui. The same remarks apply to this district as to Wellington.

Waitara. This district is showing a good improvement each season, owing to the burnt country getting cleaned up and very little new burning going on at present.

Nelson.—There has been part tender wool in this district, but not so pronounced as in other places. Taken all round the clip is a good average one, being clean and bright, and free from seed.

Blenheim.—Parts of this district have suffered from the dry autumn, particularly where farmers have been overstocked. On the other hand, a large proportion of the coast and back-country wools came in in first-class order, being well grown, clean and bright, particularly some of the merino wools.

Taking the whole of the Wellington Valuation District, the wool not having grown so well, the fleeces are smaller and finer. In consequence of this fact the grower, although receiving more money per pound of wool, will possibly yet receive a smaller cheque this season for the same flock as shorn last season, there being less bulk of wool.

Christchurch and Timaru.—Growth of wool: The wool is of a more robust type than could be said of last season's, particularly three-quarter-bred grown in the Timaru district, but not quite so marked in Christchurch on three-quarter bred. Half-bred and merino also show good growth, and are a better style of wool generally than last season's.

Condition: Generally speaking condition is good, almost entirely free from tender fleeces, and yields should be better than the average season's in Canterbury. This is shown in the lesser number of bales that are being put out for scouring so far this season, particularly of fleece wool.