

AUSTRALIAN WOOL.

We have received the following circular from Eug. Troost & Co., Melbourne, dated 1st February, 1902, dealing with the wool trade of Australia for the season of 1901-1902: The last sales held in Melbourne, from the 28th to the 31st January, practically brought the Victorian buying season to a close. A large business has been transacted in this market, the quantity sold being 313,000 bales, and surpassing that of last season by 51,800 bales. After the issue of our circular of the 4th November last, prices on this side receded to the extent of five per cent., but they recovered in December owing to the revival of the Continental demand, which was particularly strong towards the end of the year. When the sales reopened in January, a further stiffening was noticeable, which culminated in an advance of 5 to 10 per cent. just prior to the opening of the London first series. The selection during the past month had considerably fallen off, and the few lines of good merino wools elicited the keenest competition from French and German buyers; whilst comebacks and cross-breeds considerably recovered from their low level, owing to an increased Yorkshire demand. Speaking generally, the English demand has been the most regular from the beginning of the season, the Continental section becoming prominent in November and December, whilst the American representatives operated freely as soon as their style of wool was catalogued, viz., from the middle of November to the end of December. The total business done in the Australian markets since the 1st July last is shown by the following figures:

	—1901-1902.—		—1900-1901.—	
	Offered.	Sold.	Offered.	Sold.
Sydney	433,600	416,000	295,000	266,500
Melbourne-Geelong	337,000	313,000	287,500	261,200
Adelaide	72,000	65,000	51,800	42,800
Brisbane	23,000	17,000	10,000	8,100
	865,600	811,000	644,300	578,600

Last year our season extended well into February. We estimate the distribution of this season's Colonial purchases (811,000 bales) to be as follows:

Continent of Europe	410,000 bales.
United Kingdom	290,000 bales.
U. S. America and Canada	36,000 bales.
Japan and India	3,000 bales.
Local manufacturers, scourers, speculators, etc..	72,000 bales.

811,000 bales.

A decrease in the production is expected in Queensland and South Australia, but Victoria will hardly show any change, and New South Wales will perhaps, have a small increase, so that the total production for season 1901-1902 may show a very insignificant, if any, augmentation over that of 1900-1901.

Freights—Steamer rates are 7-16d. and 9-16d. for greasy and scoured respectively; sailers quote 1-16d. less. Exchange on London is $\frac{7}{8}$ per cent., and $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. discount for 60 and 90 days' sight respectively.

SOME POINTS REGARDING THE WOOL CLIP.

Now that the wool clip season is about commencing a timely hint reminding sheep-owners how much the market price of wool is depreciated by carelessness and inattention to the following avoidable circumstances, prepared for the

Argentine growers, but equally applicable in Canada, will not be amiss:

1. When the fleece is damp, dirty or full of earthy or sandy matter—the result of gross negligence.

2. When the fleece is full of burs or other similar foreign and injurious substances.

3. When the fleece is soiled or matted with sheep droppings (clags), or bound up with such dirty locks and tailings.

4. When the fleeces are tied by string or other similar vegetable materials, which interfere with the dyeing of the wool, and not by wool bands.

5. When the fleece is chemically or mechanically injured by being marked with dyes or tar, which interferes with the washing, dyeing or manufacture of the wool. It is better to mark sheep on the horns, ears, or legs, where no harm can be done.

6. That the fleeces are so clean and thoroughly washed as to be free of any wash or dip that may have been employed for the cure of scab, or other parasites infesting the fleece of sheep, especially when the lime and sulphur dip (sulphite of lime), perchance has been applied, when it must be entirely removed by clear water before being washed in soap and water, or the wool will not take the dye well.

7. There are many other small details which it is necessary the flockmaster should observe. In England, after the sheep have been washed, they are turned into a clean croft or paddock for a short time before they are shorn. The wool must be quite dry before clipping, or the fibre becomes deteriorated, and has a tendency to rot. The shearing must be done on a clean floor, so that the wool cannot pick up any foreign matter. On the other hand, the clipping must not be too long delayed after washing, or it returns to its greasy condition. Washed wool should not be mixed up with greasy wool. When string or other like material has been employed in tying the fleece, it has been frequently observed that while it passes detection in the first instance, when the wool comes to be manufactured into cloth and dyed, then the hemp is detected, inasmuch as it, being vegetable matter, will not take the color the same as wool, and the manufactured cloth is spoiled in consequence.

Touching washing, the "suint" which is removed by these means forms about one-half the total weight of the raw fleece in the merino sheep; but in the ordinary sheep of the English downs it averages about 15 per cent., while the fatty matter in the washed fleece varies from 8 per cent. to 30 per cent. In some of the colonies the fleece is often washed after shearing, and the flocks of wool spread out and turned to dry, much like hay, on large, clean, wooden floors. While all these adverse circumstances which have been adverted to lower the value of wool materially, on the other hand there is nothing that appreciates a fleece more than cleanliness and good condition; or, in other words, when it is thoroughly and carefully handled, washed clean, has no extraneous matters, is free from all hurtful impurities, of a good color, properly got up, shown off and marketed to the greatest advantage, thus obtaining for itself a high character and the top price. As the value of the finer wools is once more on the rise, these matters for the nonce have a much greater importance for the wool grower than usual.

—A young man, who worked in a large cotton spinning factory at Stockport, and whose job consisted in opening the bales of raw cotton and feeding them into a machine in the first process, took small-pox, the contagion being conveyed in the cotton.