

warranted, to a certain extent, by the fact that last year Riverina wools were too short in staple and too poorly grown for the United States, so that Geelong was the only market for the so-called light and stylish American wools. But to-day these same wools are less fine and carrying far more yolk than last year, whilst there are many Riverina clips which will again suit the American demand, which explains the difference in values for the Geelong wools, as compared to last season. Generally speaking, the clip is much better grown and less burry than its predecessor, but also less fine, and carrying far more yolk, so that yields may be from 2 to 4 per cent. below last year's. Fine wett wools will be extremely scarce. The present season is the latest on record; this is due partly to the late lambing, which delayed the start of shearing, and partly to the wet weather we have experienced during the past month. The quantities sold in this market, since the opening of the season, amount to only 30,500 bales, as against 59,500 bales last year. Owners are now meeting the market readily, and there is every prospect of a large business being done from now to January next.

With regard to production, it is rather early to venture an opinion; there seems no doubt that this year considerably less sheep have been shorn in New South Wales and Queensland than in 1902, as the disastrous drought and its consequent losses in stock lasted until April, 1903. But the clip cuts much heavier, and the grower who shears less sheep this season gets frequently more bales than last year, owing to the broader growth and the increased amount of yolk in his wool. Therefore, there is a divergency of opinion on this point, but whatever the ultimate statistical position will be, there is some justification for the assumption that owing to the lessened yields, the supply of Australian wool will again remain behind last year, as far as it relates to the amount of clean scoured merino wool obtainable from the present clip. The pastoral outlook is most promising, and in nearly all the great sheep districts of Australia grass and herbage are exceedingly abundant. With another good season next year, one may reasonably expect a normal increase in production after 1904.

Freights.—Steamer rates are ½d. and ¾d. for greasy and scoured respectively; sailers quote ¾d. less.



### ELECTRICALLY-DRIVEN LOOMS IN GERMANY.

The Electrical Engineer, of London, England, states that a co-operative enterprise with a view to supplying the domestic weavers (of the silk ribbon trade), in the Southern Black Forest with electric power has lately been started in the Hotzenwald district, it being contemplated to drive by electricity the looms of 500 weavers living in twenty-eight different localities. The first cost of the whole of the power plant is estimated at about \$82,800, this sum to be supplied by the Wald-Elektra Sackingen-Waldshut Power Company, apart from a grant by the Government. The significance of this enterprise is its enabling the above branch of textile industry to be preserved as a home industry, securing a yearly income of about \$73,000 to the poor inhabitants of that part of the forest. Moreover, the diminution of strain on the physical strength and health of the weavers will allow of people of even moderate strength devoting themselves to domestic weaving without endangering their health, so that a rational division of work can be made between the members of the same family, especially during the season of rush in the silk trade. Weavers will also be in a position to deal with

stouter goods, securing them higher profits, apart from the sanitary advantages attendant on electrical operation and lighting.



### BRITISH WOOL AND TEXTILE MARKETS.

(Special Correspondence, Canadian Journal of Fabrics.)

With the approach of Christmas, business is becoming gradually less and less, in fact it has almost reached the stage of stagnation. The hardening tendency, which showed itself towards the close of the sales, is still in evidence, and there are no bargains to be obtained in wool in spite of the fact that a good many firms take stock at the end of this month. On the other hand, buyers are also adopting a waiting policy and very few wools or tops are changing hands. Last week I spoke to two large continental buyers who were pessimistic with regard to the prospects of business on the continent. However, it did not appear to them that prices would go materially lower than they are at present.

Reports from Germany state that the market on raw material is very fair. A large strike at one of the principal manufacturing centres is affecting business somewhat, but as long as the strike does not spread, it will not have any considerable influence on woollens and worsteds. A large business is being done in zibelines, especially those in the manufacture of which silk noils are used. On the other hand the mohair zibeline is not by any means so much in demand as formerly. Hosiery and underwear business is very good, and the Jaeger and other manufacturers are sold well forward.

The reports from Australia are by no means so glowing as those of a few months ago. A few weeks since, we were told that the market there was advancing, but I have good authority for stating that such an advance never existed, and in any case the slump at London soon made itself felt in Australia.

A considerable number of merchants here expressed the opinion that the slump in London was manipulated by the large buyers in order to bear the market and to make their purchases from the colonies on a low basis. Whether such is the case or not remains to be seen. As far as Yorkshire is concerned, and as far as one can gather from the existent condition on the continent and in the United States, woollen manufacturers are not busy, and this factor controls the market much more than any manipulation on the part of buyers or sellers.

With regard to rags and shoddies, the demand for blacks still continues, and several large orders have been placed for different grades of Government clips, which had been accumulated for months. In other grades prices are firm, but only a moderate quantity of orders is being placed. The price of cotton is causing alarm, not only to spinners and manufacturers, but also to the retail trade, which sees itself obliged to pay higher prices and is afraid of purchasing at current rates.

An important textile exhibition is to be held in Bradford during the coming year in the Cartwright Memorial Hall, which will then be opened. To all who are interested in dress goods, and to cloth manufacturers in general, this exhibition should be of interest, as it will be of an international character, and already exhibits from the principal continental manufacturing firms have been promised.

Bradford, Eng., 22nd December, 1903.