

South American Wool in Demand

Uruguay ranks next to Argentina—Produces a high class commodity.

In a statement recently issued, Albert J. Barnaud, district office manager of the local office of the U. S. Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, states that "the present enormous demand for wool for army uniforms is absorbing the supplies of the three great primary markets — Europe, Australasia and South America.

"With Great Britain in control of English and Australasian wool, the attention of manufacturers in the United States is centered on South American sources," said Mr. Barnaud. "In the years just preceding the European war, the average yearly imports of clothing wool from South America were about 25,000,000 pounds, from Europe 30,000,000 pounds, and from Australasia 13,000,000 pounds. Beginning with 1914, the imports of wool from all sources greatly increased, the gain in wool imports from South America being unprecedented. In 1914 the imports of clothing wool from South America were 38,697,428 pounds; in 1915 this figure was more than trebled, in 1916 it was quadrupled, and in 1917 the imports were more than six times pre-war records. The 1918 clip promises to equal, if not to exceed, the last.

URUGUAY'S PLACE AS A WOOL-PRODUCING COUNTRY.

"The importance of Argentina as a wool-producing country has long been recognized, but Uruguay's share in the South American production of wool has not heretofore been realized. The place held by Uruguay among South American producers is shown in the following table:

UNITED STATES IMPORTS OF CLOTHING WOOL FROM SOUTH AMERICA.

	Pounds		
	1915.	1916.	1917.
Argentina .. .	63,373,017	110,085,992	187,078,443
Brazil .. .	115,147	87,864	4,178
Chile .. .	2,369,359	9,611,489	12,434,230
Colombia .. .	492	.....	370
Ecuador .. .	.....	.....	414,643
Peru .. .	819,347	2,426,279	2,232,562
Uruguay .. .	14,612,703	8,941,506	33,304,462

Total .. . 81,290,065 131,153,130 235,468,888

CLOTHING WOOL URUGUAY'S CHIEF CONTRIBUTION.

"Uruguay produces chiefly a high grade wool, which is entered in the United States customs as clothing wool. A small amount of angora and alpaca wool also comes from Uruguay, as may be seen from the table below of classified wool imports from that country in the past five years:

UNITED STATES IMPORTS OF WOOL FROM URUGUAY.

	Pounds		
	1913.	1914.	1915.
Cloth wool .. .	2,657,620	7,972,159	14,612,703
Carpet wool .. .	181,049	1,224,991	.....
Total .. .	2,838,669	9,197,150	14,612,703
	Pounds		
	1916.	1917.	
Clothing wool .. .	8,941,506	33,304,462	
Combing wool .. .	245,506	33,304,462	
Carpet wool .. .	415,922	2,849,788	
Angora and alpaca .. .	2,289	.....

Total .. . 9,604,807 36,183,660

"Since June 30, 1917, there have been imported 6,576,669 pounds of clothing wool; 19,383 pounds of combing wool, 295,926 pounds of carpet wool, making a total in the four months from July 1 to October 31, inclusive, of 6,891,978 pounds.

DESTINATION OF URUGUAYAN WOOL.

"The United States took nearly three-fourths of the 1916-17 clip of Uruguayan wool, though in former years only about one-tenth to one-fourth of the total clip came to this country. The shipments of wool from Uruguay to European ports as well as to the United States in the past five years appear in the following table. The wool year in Uruguay runs from October 1 to September 30, and this prevents an exact comparison with United States statistics. The bale unit used in the following figures is equal to about 992 pounds or 450 kilos.

SHIPMENTS OF WOOL FROM URUGUAY.

	Bales					
	1912-	1913-	1914-	1915-	1916-	1917-
Destination.	1913.	1914.	1915.	1916.	1917.	
Dunkirk .. .	37,677	25,948	.....	.....	.....
Antwerp .. .	19,030	17,408	.....	.....	.....
Hamburg .. .	22,633	25,231	.....	.....	.....

Bremen .. .	7,495	2,350	.....	.....	.....
Genoa .. .	6,783	2,981	44,767	22,832	10,665
U. Kingdom .. .	13,918	2,838	1,004	1,161	1,729
Un. States .. .	2,766	10,522	15,157	10,080	46,078
Bordeaux and					

Marseilles .. .	44	1,042	673	770	1,675
Havre .. .	4,190	1,921	.....	.....	253
Trieste .. .	5,163	5,639	.....	.....	.....
Other .. .	2,468	4,302	11,175	10,128	2,958

Totals .. . 122,167 100,282 72,776 44,971 63,358

NEW EXPORT DUTIES ON WOOL TO URUGUAY

"The Government of Uruguay adopted on November 9 a law providing for an export duty of 4 per cent ad valorem on wool, the valuations being fixed for the 1917-18 wool year at 120 pesos (peso equals \$1.034) per 100 kilos (kilo equals 2.2046 pounds) for raw wool, and 200 pesos per 100 kilos for washed wool. The bill providing for these changes brought out much discussion in Congress and in the newspapers. 'El Siglo,' of Montevideo, commented to the effect that while 4 per cent may be considered a rather high rate, if account be taken of the present abnormal conditions, and the fact that the Government is facing a deficit, it will be recognized that the only recourse is to increase the duties on such products as can stand a high tax by virtue of unusually good market prices.

"It is expected that the new tax will more than treble the Government revenues from the exports of wool. The new clip is estimated at 45,000,000 kilos (a little less than 100,000 bales), and at the valuation placed by the Treasury committee this wool will be worth 54,000,000 pesos, or \$56,836,000. The Uruguayan exporter is expected to receive 56.2 cents per pound for his wool, out of which he must pay 2.2 cents per pound export duty. At the old rate of export duty, 1.30 pesos per 100 kilos, the Government would receive a total wool revenue of 585,000 pesos, while under the new duty of 4 per cent of 120 pesos per 100 kilos, or 4.80 pesos, the Treasury funds will be increased to the extent of 2,160,000 pesos. As the new duties are fixed for one year only, it is believed that the rate will be reduced when warranted by changed economic conditions.

URUGUAYAN WOOL EXPOSITION IN FEBRUARY.

"A national wool exposition is to be held in Montevideo from February 17 to 23, 1918. The Government of Uruguay has shown great interest in the improvement of the quality and quantity of the wool produced in that country, and it is offering prizes for the best wool, samples to be sent later to foreign countries which specialize in the manufacture of woolen fabrics. Efforts are being made, also, to extend the industry of washing wool, which has hitherto received little attention in Uruguay."

WOOL AUCTION PRICES.

Australian wools were sold last week at the first public auction for many years in the United States for the highest prices ever known. The sale was held by the Textile Alliance, Incorporated, by order of the Director of Raw Materials of the British Government, at the Chamber of Commerce, and was attended by six or seven hundred mill men and dealers, only ticket holders being admitted. Frank P. Windeler, for the British Government, served as auctioneer.

Prices generally were from 10c to 25c per pound above the highest expectations of the most expert dealers, and not a few of the prices obtained brought forth whistles of surprise and exclamations of astonishment from those bidding. There was no lack of spirited bidding during the first two and one-half hours; in fact, the competition was so sharp that it took the auctioneer much longer than anticipated. He did not reach the three-hundredth of the nearly five hundred lots until 6.30 P.M.

Most of the lots brought 10 per cent or more over the high estimates made before the sale and were claimed to be 30 per cent above any previous price.

There were many lots out of the total of 4,736 bales offered which sold for more than \$1 per pound. The highest, outside the first lot at \$1.10, for first greasy merino. When it is considered that this wool will double in cost when scoured and will amount to about \$2.35 to \$2.50 per pound when put in top it will be realized that the price is far over all previous records.

The price of 72d for the same wools cleaned in London under British Government license shrinks into insignificance when compared with these sale figures, amounting to 55d in the grease and 110d clean.

When Mr. Windeler reached the bellies and part pieces lots it was after 7 o'clock, but even then few of the crowd had left, and the bidding became at once more spirited than for the hour just preceding.

Prices previously characterized as "ridiculous" and "outrageous" were even more out of proportion on

Urge Wool Exports Embargo for Canada

"An embargo on the exportation of Canadian wool is now being suggested by many textile men in the Dominion," says the Toronto "Globe." "It is claimed that as the United States has placed an embargo on the exportation of wools, with other materials, from the United States, Canada should consider her own interests and act accordingly."

"For some time past some sharp differences of opinion have existed in Canada on the question of wool embargoes. The wool growers in the West have demanded a right to sell their wool in the best market, financially, and any attempt or talk or suggestion to the removal of the duty on Canadian wool by the exportation of wool from Canada has been strenuously opposed by the Westerners.

"Discussing the matter, a prominent Western wool man declared that the Alberta wool grower's objection to the embargo referred to is founded on the fact that it limits him to a narrow market. Prior to the removal of the duty on Canadian wool by the United States Government the sheep ranchers of southern Alberta had many years' experience in marketing their wool for from two to four cents per pound less than did the ranchers of Montana, immediately on the other side of the international boundary, although the quality of the wool and the breeding of the animals in both cases were identical.

"As soon as the duty was removed Canadian wool growers received exactly the same price as was obtained by the wool growers of Montana. From this experience the wool growers of Alberta drew the conclusion that the discrimination that formerly existed was due to tariff and the absence of competition. This conclusion became a settled conviction two years ago, when the Ontario wool buyers dropped the price of Western wool five cents per pound immediately after the embargo on wool was declared by the Government at Ottawa, and raised it the same amount as soon as the embargo was removed.

"For these reasons the Western wool growers oppose any movement that may tend to place them again at the mercy of the woolen buyers from eastern Canada. They emphatically object to having restrictions placed on the marketing of their product, while the sale of the resulting product is unrestricted.

"Arguing that the new Government should take up the wool embargo question, and affirming that the Canadian Wool Commission will be asked to consider the matter and decide whether such a question comes within the scope of this body, a prominent textile man declared that the 'embargo is now in order.'

"If this is 'war to the hilt,'" said he, "and the manufacturing interests are to have all kinds of restrictions imposed upon them, why should not the Canadian wool growers be forced to stand for some restriction? I contend that all the Canadian wools needed in Canada should be kept here.

"If they are exported, they cannot be returned, as under former conditions, and even if they could be, the expense entailed in bringing these wools back to Canada is not only heavy, but absolutely wasteful. So far as I am concerned, I am ready and willing to enter into negotiations with the Canadian wool growers, as a means of settling our differences.

"There is something to be said on both sides, and a conference presided over by a member of the Government would no doubt straighten out this matter. We believe that the Canadian wool growers are getting better treatment at the hands of the Government than are the manufacturing interests."

the poor wools. Figures obtained were about double what they should have been, according to the buyers. One of the best experts found himself from 10 to 20 cents above his high estimates on most of these lots.

Hills Nichols, of Boston and Providence, and Crimmins and Pierce, of Boston, were the highest bidders on a large part of the poorer grade lots.

It was nearly 8 P. M. when the 476th lot was sold, five bales of "greasy bellies" merino, and it brought 75 cents a pound. The lowest price for any lot in the sale was 65 cents. This was for a three-bale lot of greasy first fleece (merino like all others.) By some chance there was only one bid on this.

Thirty thousand bales brought by one steamer and 13,500 by another have arrived and will be auctioned within a short time.

Mr. Windeler was asked about the time for the next sale but did not care to make an announcement to-night. He was cheered as he left the speaker's desk.