

Supply of Raw Material.—During a number of months of the year when this State was badly affected by a long and severe drought great numbers of cattle and sheep were from this cause rushed into the markets, thus materially increasing the supply of bones and refuse from the local canning-works. Since the partial breaking-up of the drought in January a very limited supply of stock has come from the country; in consequence of this all the local meat-packing works have lately been compelled to close down. Regarding the other source of supply—dry country bones—this has shown a material decrease of late, notwithstanding the very high price now paid (£6 per ton at railway-station). The price of this class of bone is regulated entirely by the Colonial Sugar Company, who must, at any cost, obtain from 60 to 80 tons per week for the preparation of bone char.

Shipment of Manure to New Zealand.—The total quantity of animal-manure shipped to the Dominion was 26,391 bags, weighing 1,902 tons. Although these figures are almost double those of last year, they are much below those of pre-war times. The causes of the decreased exportation are as follows: (1) Impossibility of obtaining shipping-space; (2) result of the Commonwealth embargo placed against the exportation of fertilizers (still operative); (3) the growing increase of the use of fertilizers within the Commonwealth; (4) decrease in the supply of raw material. A return to normal conditions will doubtless remove the two first-mentioned causes, but not the remaining ones; more fertilizers will be required each year in Australia for local use, and the source of the supply of bone, &c., will not increase in the same ratio as the requirements. It seems very doubtful, therefore, if New Zealand will again be able to rely upon obtaining the quantity imported from here in the past—some 7,000 tons per annum.

Animal-hair.—Messrs. D. Lee and Sons, of Botany, were the only exporters of animal-hair this year. Their works at Botany were regularly visited during the preparation and treatment of these shipments. I at all times found this firm anxious to fully comply with the requirements of the regulations dealing with this product.

Assistance.—I wish to record the good work done by my assistant at Botany, Mr. J. Pearson, who carried out his duties in a very efficient and faithful manner. My thanks are also due to the State Chief Inspector of Stock, Mr. S. T. D. Symonds, M.R.C.V.S., for valuable assistance on many occasions.

List of mills.—Following is a list of mills in Australia working under a New Zealand license during year ended 31st March, 1919:—

License No.	Name of Mill.	Licensee.	Location.
1	Metropolitan	M. O'Riordan and Sons	O'Riordan Street, Alexandria, Sydney.
3	Excelsior	M. Gearin and Sons	Old Botany Road, Mascot, Sydney.
4	Pyramid	Patón, Burns, and Co.	O'Riordan Street, Mascot, Sydney.
6	Riverstone Meat-works ..	B. Richards and Sons (Limited) ..	Riverstone, N.S.W.
7	Gladstone Meat-works ..	Gladstone Meat-works of Queensland (Limited) ..	Gladstone, Queensland.

SHEEP-DIPPING.

Although some apprehension existed as to whether the supply of dip-mixtures would be sufficient for requirements, it is satisfactory to report that the representations which were made by the Government through the High Commissioner ensured a sufficient supply for the season's requirements.

In addition to the "Anconia" dip, which was proved to be quite ineffective for the purpose of eradicating lice and ticks from sheep, there is evidence of other inefficient dips being placed on the market, and the gazettement of regulations, as proposed, to ensure that none but dips proved on analysis to be effective will, I am sure, be a step in the right direction and be welcomed by all concerned.

A number of prosecutions have again had to be instituted for exposing sheep affected with lice in public saleyards. This, in my opinion, is a serious offence, and I am satisfied that in the interests of sheepowners as a whole and of the sheep industry it should be reduced to a minimum. Offenders in this respect would be well advised to take warning.

POULTRY.

Although very little if any substantial progress has been made in the poultry industry during the year, it has no doubt held its own better than was anticipated under the adverse conditions it has had to stand against. The influenza epidemic, coming as it did when the breeding operations were in full swing, had a serious effect. Not only did it mean that hatching and brooding operations had to be greatly curtailed throughout the country, but, in addition, heavy mortality took place among the young birds that were already hatched, owing to their owners being unable to give them the necessary attention. Obviously, on account of the shortage of pullets, which must be chiefly depended upon to lay in the winter, fresh eggs are commanding, and will continue to command, record prices during the winter months.

It is gratifying to note that the large demand continues for settings of eggs and birds for breeding purposes from the Department's poultry-stations, and it is to be regretted that this demand cannot be adequately met owing to the limitations of the present plants. No doubt many of the orders come chiefly from those who previously conducted poultry-keeping on a small scale, but were compelled for a time to go out of the business owing to the high cost of food and the inferior laying-qualities of their stock. The high price of foodstuffs which has ruled for several years may yet prove a blessing in disguise, if for no other reason than that it has forced poultry-keepers to realize the necessity of keeping none but tested laying-strains. During the year food-prices have ruled at a high level of value, but so have eggs. Many poultry-keepers who conduct the business on sound lines declare that the margin of profit over cost of production has given them a better return for the labour spent on their fowls than existed before.

During the year Mr. E. C. Jarrett, Overseer of the poultry section at Ruakura Farm, was appointed as a Poultry Instructor, and has now taken up his duties in the Auckland District. Arrangements are also being made to obtain the services of Mr. L. C. Cocker, of Christchurch, as an additional Instructor, and to locate him in the Wellington District. So great has been the demand for the services of the