

POSITION OF THE HEMP INDUSTRY

The general position in regard to the hemp industry of the Dominion at the present time, unfortunately, is that the quality in the larger centres is gradually going back, and has been for the past five or six years. The industry has therefore been adversely affected by the large production of low-grade fibre, and unless some united action is taken by the millers whereby the hemp will be prepared with much more care, and only lines of a uniform quality forwarded to the grading-stores, our fibre will be neglected by the overseas trade for fibres of a more even quality.

The ease or difficulty with which manufacturers are able to put the fibre through the various processes in spinning has a great influence on the demand, but it should never be lost sight of that the real consumer is the one who uses the article manufactured. Rope and twine manufacturers may make goods with ease or with difficulty according to the fibre being dealt with, and in each case the article may have a good appearance and sell readily, but it is the user of the goods who proves their real value and gives them the reputation which will ultimately be responsible for increasing or diminishing the demand. It is a well-known fact that binder-twine made from New Zealand good-fair grade (72 to 78 points) cannot be surpassed by binder-twine made from any other fibres in the world, and if our good-fair is found so suitable for this purpose, how much better must be our "fine" grade (80 to 86 points), and how much more likely to earn a higher reputation and increase demand.

GRADING STATISTICS.

The following tables give particulars of the grading during the year ended 31st March, 1921, the Dominion totals and percentages for the previous year being also shown for comparison in the first three tables:—

Hemp (Bales).

Grading-ports.	Superior.	Fine.	Good-fair.	High-fair.	Low-fair.	Common.	Rejected.	Condemned.	Total.
Auckland .. ..	..	12	2,653	6,665	5,476	455	42	..	15,303
Foxton .. ..	..	..	2,431	14,084	4,625	259	174	..	21,573
Wellington .. ..	..	1	5,052	19,403	8,073	1,040	324	4	33,897
Wairoa (Hawke's Bay)	..	..	3,007	33	..	..	..	..	3,040
Blenheim .. ..	..	33	800	332	46	4	..	..	1,295
Picton	83	464	242	..	..	..	..	..	789
Dunedin .. ..	..	..	545	841	196	11	..	..	1,593
Bluff .. ..	..	..	1,861	2,448	703	11	..	..	5,023
Lyttelton .. ..	..	15	161	147	..	..	..	..	323
Totals, 1920-21 ..	83	525	16,832	43,953	19,119	1,780	540	4	82,836
Percentage	0.1	0.63	20.32	53.06	23.08	2.14	0.60	0.004	..
Totals, 1919-20 ..	..	800	16,228	48,345	23,102	2,057	336	..	90,868
Percentage .. ..	..	0.88	17.82	53.23	25.43	2.26	0.37	..	..

Total decrease in 1920-21, 8,032 bales.

Tow (Bales).

Grading-ports.	First Grade.	Second Grade.	Third Grade.	Condemned.	Total.
Auckland	177	1,388	484	17	2,066
Foxton	1,110	3,287	277	2	4,676
Wellington	3,480	3,828	312	46	7,666
Bluff .. ..	..	1,231	57	11	1,299
Dunedin .. ..	..	221	3	..	224
Blenheim	208	157	2	..	367
Picton	264	8	..	..	272
Wairoa (Hawke's Bay)	424	..	..	..	424
Lyttelton .. ..	..	625	..	..	625
Totals, 1920-21 ..	5,663	10,745	1,135	76	17,619
Percentage	32.14	60.98	6.15	0.43	..
Totals, 1919-20 ..	6,960	11,194	1,533	71	19,758
Percentage	35.50	57.50	7.50	0.35	..

Total decrease in 1920-21, 2,139 bales.