

the average price for the season being 16d. per pound, against 10½d. for the previous season. The declared value of the wool exported was £15,265,264, as compared with £11,955,567 for the previous period. The greater portion of the whole clip was sold at the local auctions, consequently the proceeds were promptly available to growers.

It is very satisfactory to record a substantial increase in the number of cattle and sheep in the Dominion, and also an addition to the number of pigs. In cattle the increase is almost wholly in the dairy classes, and in sheep largely in the breeding-ewes. In both these directions a further increase may be expected. The health of all live-stock has been good.

Lamb and mutton have realized very satisfactory prices during the year, especially lamb, and the prospects for a continuance of good returns are encouraging. The need of maintaining our export meat at the best standard of quality must never be lost sight of.

Trial shipments of eggs to the London market during the year were successful, and should lead to a development of this trade in the near future.

The quantity and value of the exports of the undermentioned products were as follows, the total value under these headings showing an increase of over six million pounds for the year :—

	Quantity.	Value. £
Beef (frozen and salted)	712,533 cwt.	844,187
Mutton and lamb (carcases)	6,328,871	8,615,619
Other meats (including bacon and pork)	382,249
Tallow	26,358 tons	852,471
Casings	2,755,845 lb.	507,819
Sheep-skins (woolly) and pelts	9,127,383	1,294,855
Hides and skins	999,181	774,125
Rabbit-skins	14,951,746	493,708
Live-stock	106,430
Other miscellaneous items	33,811
Wool (bales)	736,713	15,265,264
Dairy-produce	18,576,474
		<u>£47,747,012</u>

Owing to a reduction in the areas sown, and to unfavourable weather conditions during the growing-period, the production of wheat and oats shows a decrease, and it will be necessary to import wheat and oats to the value of £1,250,000 before next season's harvest is ready.

The quantity of phormium hemp graded during the year shows an increase of nearly 6,000 bales. It is still necessary for millers to give greater attention to the output of fibre of a better and more uniform quality.

The prospects of the fruit industry are improving. The substantial assistance granted to growers by the Government guarantee of a penny per pound net return on fruit exported, and by the help afforded in other directions, has improved the conditions of the industry. The exports for the year were not far short of 150,000 cases, and for the current season will show an increase to over 240,000.

The export of honey is now well established, although the figures for the past year show a decrease, due mainly to unfavourable weather conditions having reduced the season's production.

The prospects of the pastoral, agricultural, and horticultural industries of the Dominion were never better than at present, and this, in conjunction with the high degree of intelligence and industry for which our rural population is noted, give very substantial ground for confidence in the future of the Dominion.

For the purpose of providing young men who intend to follow agricultural and pastoral pursuits with better opportunities for acquiring up-to-date and scientific knowledge by which production may be increased, it is intended to give Government support and assistance to the establishment of at least one, and later on possibly two, agricultural colleges under trained and competent instructors. The necessary equipment will be provided to enable our farmers to compete successfully with other countries which are apparently endeavouring even now to capture the markets of the world so far as agricultural and pastoral products are concerned.