Wool-scouring Trials.

In anticipation that it will ultimately be necessary to introduce into the wool-testing scheme a method for determining the clean-scoured yields of each fleece, work has been continued during the past two seasons on the samples of wool selected from different parts of the fleece. The results secured to date indicate that the selection of samples from the right and left sides of the sheep gives no significant difference as regards the clean yield, and that there is no general rule that the heaviest fleeces have the lowest clean yield, or, in other words, there is no tendency for fleeces to be heavy simply because they have a larger amount of grease and dirt than lighter fleeces possess. The investigations have been designed to find out, in the first place, from which region of the fleece a sample should be taken, and, secondly, the size of the sample which would give the best indication of yield of the whole fleece.

American practices recommend a 1 lb. sample selected from behind the shoulder, but local investigations up to the present indicate that this area does not appear to give results with any greater degree of accuracy than does the shoulder itself or the side.

From the trials already conducted it would appear impossible to attain a degree of accuracy greater than 2·5 per cent. on either side of the mean. The range of the size of sample taken varied from about ½ lb. to 1 lb., and the results from the smaller sample seemed to possess as high a degree of accuracy as from the larger. The conclusion has been reached that the ½ lb. sample would be of a completely satisfactory size for testing purposes.

Sheep-branding Fluids.

The tests with the branding-fluids prepared by the British Wool Industrial Research Association have been continued, and those fluids whose formulæ were established in 1930 and 1931 show that they possess equal, if not superior, qualities to any other fluids at present available on the New Zealand market. In these fluids two earlier defects have apparently been overcome—namely, a tendency for the fluid to be unduly thick, and, secondly, for the particles of the pigment to be unduly coarse.

XI. Farm Advisory Service.

For the year ending 31st March, 1933, considerable progress by the Farm Advisory Service is reported. In fact, upon the publication of a bulletin on the work in February, 1932, the demand for the Service developed so rapidly that assistance had to be secured. Professor Alexander, Director of Lincoln College, arranged for his Assistant, Mr. H. J. Geddes, to assist part-time in the work from April, 1932, until the latter's resignation in January, 1933. Greatly appreciated and valuable as this assistance was, the amount of the work was such that it could still not be handled. In June, 1932, the assistance of Mr. M. H. Rogers was obtained under the 4A Unemployment Scheme. Mr. Rogers is still working under that scheme.

To direct operations in farm-management, to advise on special phases of management, and to report on the management of farms, a total of 400-odd visits were made during the year to over ninety farms. The development of the Service may be shown by the following table:—

Classification of Service.	Number of Farms.	
	31st March, 1931.	31st March, 1933.
Complete control	4	10
Co-operating control, supervision, special and general advice ..	20-odd	90-odd

The farms under complete control may be listed as follows:—

Locality.	Area.	Class of Farming.
	Acres.	
Wheatstone, Ashburton	389	Mixed cropping and sheep.
Fairfield, Ashburton	140	Sheep, fat lamb raising.
Seafield, Ashburton	572	Sheep, fat lamb raising and irrigation experiments.
Belfast, Christchurch	218	Mixed cropping.
McLean's Island	720	Sheep, irrigation experiments.
Halswell	100	Dairying, town supply.
Dunsandel	142	Dairying.
Southbridge	674	Mixed cropping and sheep.
Southbridge	162	Mixed cropping and sheep.
Methven	1,231	Sheep, fat lambs, cattle.

Total number of farms, 10.