

out a fair line, principally owing to the distance the leaf has to be carried, thereby inducing heating, which turns the leaf black and makes good dressing and colour impossible. Four or five millers have been securing a fine grade, and one miller has produced a "superior" line. The Westland mills are turning out a fibre of an excellent standard, generally reaching high-point good-fair. They have a good leaf to work with, and the milling of it is being conducted on sound lines.

SOUTHLAND MILLS WORKING UP-TO-DATE METHODS.

Southland millers are improving their methods of stripping, and, having installed automatic washing-machines, are turning out a free and good-coloured fibre, which has been commonly reaching high-pointed good-fair. One or two millers with a small output are obtaining a good-fair article under the old methods. They certainly, however, have a good leaf to work with, though this is rather on the short side.

UNSATISFACTORY TOW.

Tow is reaching the grading-stores in a very unsatisfactory condition, except in a few instances where millers are having it shaken well. Seeing there is an increasing demand for this by-product, it is most unsatisfactory to know that the quality is declining instead of advancing.

DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOUTH.

Just sixty mills have recommenced operations in Otago and Southland this season, after having been out of commission for five or six years. The output was considerably restricted during the month owing to unfavourable weather, which was also the cause of the fibre milled being of poor colour.

CANTERBURY FIBRE OF GOOD STANDARD.

The hemp being produced in the Canterbury district is of good quality. Little of it is being graded, as the bulk is being purchased by local cordage-manufacturers. Canterbury fibre is very well milled, the resulting thread being free, strong, of good colour, and well scutched. It is thought highly of for binder-twine purposes.

STRIPPER-SLIPS.

Altogether too much gum and vegetation is being left in stripper-slips. This gives the by-product a very bad colour, and thereby militates against its extended employment. In several cases millers have been packing the slips in a damp condition, which brings about a dangerous heating of the bales. Two or three lines have arrived at the grading-stores during the month in a very heated state, with the result that they had to be condemned for export.