

Left—Burr clover as removed from a fleece and showing the wool fibres entangled. One burr has been unravelled to show the tough, hooked fibre which when torn open in the wool-processing machinery may pass through with the wool fibres and mar many yards of finished cloth. Right—Spotted burr clover showing one burr unravelled and seeds exposed.

Medicago arabica must be separated at classing, unless the whole clip is affected. If many burrs are seen, it is logical to conclude that many more are embedded in the wool and the whole clip will usually be graded for burr. Under no circumstances must the grower risk any burr being found in supposedly-free wool.

Piri piri

Piri piri (*Acaena sanguisorbae*), commonly called bidi-bidi, hutiwai, or utiwai, is a well-known native plant very common on bush-burn country. The seed ripens in a spiked ball, which in size may range from that of a shilling piece to a half-crown. The individual spikes have minute, barbed bristles which, combined with the easily-disintegrated ripe seed head, make it a real nuisance to woolly sheep and lambs.

Many back-country farmers are forced to shear their flocks (including

lambs) early solely because piri piri seed can convert a complete fleece into a hard, solid mat of wool and seed. The fine, hooked awns create another problem for the woollen industry, as some may pass through the processing machinery in the woollen mills, producing defects in finished materials. Wools containing piri piri seed must always be classed separately, for though carding machines may take light seed, any heavily-infested wool must be carbonised, and is graded accordingly.

Piri piri is usually unpalatable to stock and appears to withstand grazing by sheep, but where topdressing is done and sufficient cattle are carried the weed can be checked or eradicated. Piri piri spreads by prostrate, spreading stems which creep through pastures closely grazed or overgrazed by sheep. On topdressed and spelled country the growth of grass lifts the

runners off the ground and heavy stocking with cattle is then beneficial, particularly where efficient subdivision can be done. Shearing before burrs are ripe reduces the extent of wool contamination.

Bathurst Burr

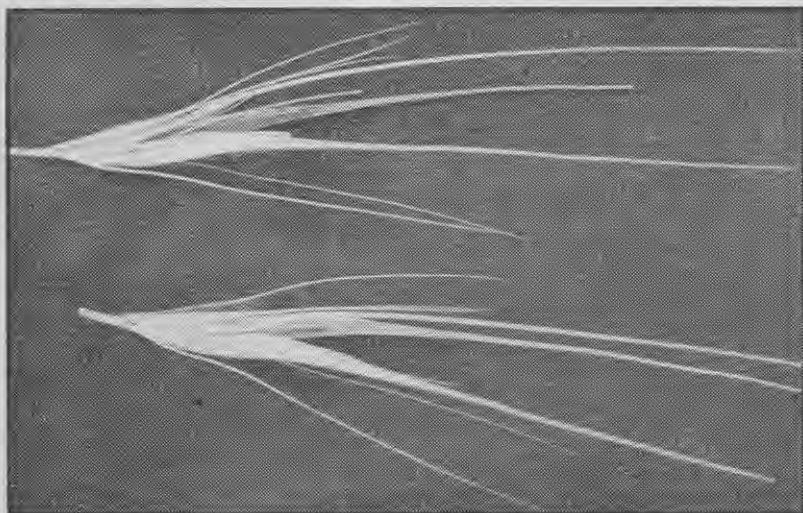
Bathurst burr (*Xanthium spinosum*) is a shrub-like plant from 9in. to 5ft. high, which favours waste areas about sheepyards, woolsheds, and river-beds, and neglected corners on good land. The under-side of the leaf and the stem are whitish, the stem being studded—in groups of three at each joint—with needle-like spines often 1in. long. The seed, which grows on the stems at the base of the leaves, is a hard oval burr thickly studded with hooked prickles. It is very easily picked up and becomes firmly embedded in the wool. In the hardness of Bathurst burr seed lies the principal danger, because it may damage manufacturing machinery in the woollen mills. Any wool containing the seed—usually occasional fleeces only—must be kept out when classing is being done, or the price for a whole clip may be affected.

Sheep's Burr

Sheep's burr (*Acaena ovina*), which was introduced from Australia, has foliage similar to piri piri, but the seeds are in small, round, hooked burrs along the stems, which are often 2ft. long. The stems have a reddish-purple tint. The space between the hooked seed pods diminishes toward the stem tips, where the burrs are clustered. Where sheep are running on an area heavily infested with sheep's burr the whole of the wool clip may have to be classed as burry. It is more usual, however, for only a few fleeces to be affected, but these must be kept separate in skirting or classing.

Burdock

Burdock (*Arctium lappa* and *A. minus*) is a strong, shrub-like plant sometimes found about river-beds, sheepyards, woolsheds, or places where



Barren brome, which has coarser and longer barbed awns than barley grass. The plant may often be found growing in profusion on river and beach shingle country.