

Kinney Bros. and Brown, lessees of three small grazing-runs at present working together: Saw Mr. Brown, who informed us that, although the snow lay to a depth of 17 in., they suffered but little loss so far. After the first five days they drove their sheep on to the shady faces from which the snow had been drifted. On this ground they were able to get at the tussock, and consequently suffered but little. He, however, anticipates a loss at lambing-time. Mr. A. Kinney saw us on the 26th. He now says their loss cannot be less than 30 per cent. of the whole flock, or that much less in value than last year.

A. Jopp; Moutere Run 233, &c.; 14,000 sheep: The snow on the lower portion fell to a depth of 18 in., on the higher part about 2½ ft. The ewe country, extending from Springvale to the Chatto Creek and up as far as Wilson's, had an average depth of not less than 20 in. The hogget country from Springvale towards Alexandra and Clyde had upwards of a foot of snow, the balance of the run with the dry sheep had the greatest quantity of snow. The number of ewes was 4,300; hoggets, 2,200; two-tooths, 2,500; wethers, 5,000: total, 14,000. The first of these at first suffered least, as more attention was paid to them in removing them down towards the river, where the tussocks on the sharp ridges were first exposed and the sun reached them earlier in the day. Afterwards, about five hundred of the half-bred were taken in to the home paddock and fed with hay, &c. Apparently the result of feeding has not been very successful, as many of the strongest ewes (carrying twin lambs) are now daily dying, while the tussock ewes are standing the result of the famishing better than the paddock sheep, although a good many are dying, as Mr. Jopp asserts, "through eating their fill, after starvation, of the cold frozen tussock." The hoggets were moved by getting teams of horses to tramp tracks through the snow towards the lower country, and to a certain extent raking and exposing the tussock in patches, and in this way getting them into small lots where they moved more readily about uncovering the stronger tussock. Two-tooths and wethers were well up towards the snow-line fence, and, although the snow was deep, the snow-grass was strongest, and the stronger of the wethers found their way about a little and in this way assisted the younger sheep by making tracks for them. The loss meantime cannot be estimated as many of the hill sheep have been caught in the drifts, and until these thaw they cannot be seen. So far in one drift they have skinned about seventy, and others will expose a similar loss later in the season. Mr. Jopp greatly fears a big death-rate when the spring grass comes away, principally through weakly ewes at lambing and "scour" among the dry sheep. Mr. Jopp will be satisfied if the loss does not exceed 20 per cent, this apart from (1) a poor lambing, (2) weakening of the young and future ewes—i.e., a deterioration in the stamina of the flock, (3) poor clip.

W. Paterson; Ayrburn Station; 14,000 sheep: This run is part of the original run held by Mr. Paterson and part of original Wanaka Run. Practically the whole of the latter and the greater part of Ayrburn consists of "dark faces" and no lambing-ground. The lambing has to be carried out on freehold, and even with this assistance to the run the carrying-capacity is only 14,000 sheep. With the exception of 1,200 hoggets all these were on the run at the time the snow fell, and were caught in from 2 ft. to 3 ft. of snow. The depth and the rough nature of the country prevented them from being reached, so that they had to remain in that position until the first thaw set in a month later. After this time they got on to the sunny faces, and now these are eaten out so much that they are compelled to try to move them on to lower country and turnips on the freehold. This is rendered difficult on account of the weak condition of the sheep. This applies more particularly to the ewe-flock. The wethers are still in a bad way, and unless more ground is cleared their condition will not be good. In reference to the ewe-flock Mr. Paterson hardly anticipates any lambing, as the ewes are too weak to mother lambs, so that the loss in country where it is so difficult to breed lambs will be all the more serious. Apart from this future loss the actual mortality is from 20 to 25 per cent.

Baird and Elliott; Coronet Peak Runs; 12,000 sheep: This run consists of a series of grouped runs comprising a large area of high and back country. The number carried for the great area held shows that the country is rough, high, and cold. As in the case of Mr. Paterson, the great difficulty is growing a sufficient number of young sheep to keep up the flock. The ewes have to be turned out to run and breed on rough country, the result being a small number of ewes and a low percentage of lambs. Hitherto they have had to stock up by purchase from other runs, and this year it will mean that, with a loss on other stations and the high prices ruling, it will be impossible to stock up from outside sources. Loss, say, 15 per cent.

Mount Pisa Station; Dalgety and Co., agents; 32,000 sheep: This run has suffered less than any of those visited, the snow being lighter all over than the others around the homestead. It fell to a depth of 3 in. on the flats and on the lower faces 18 in. At this level and up to the snow-line fences the sunny faces showed black ground quickly, and on these the sheep were moved as soon as possible, although on account of the intense fogs it was impossible to look near the flock for twelve days. The proportion of the various ages and class of stock are as follows: 10,000 ewes, 5,000 hoggets, 17,000 wethers and other dry sheep. Of the first of these, 4,000 were brought down on the low levels and hand-fed with grass and hay. The others were moved from the southerly slopes to the north-east and up to the Cardrona slopes where they weathered it well. From the Roaring Meg to Victoria Bridge and round to the Cardrona there were about 12,000 strong sheep, and the balance from the station to the Lowburn and on the dark faces the snow still lies heavy in places. The sheep seem, however, to have wintered fairly well. The manager states that upon the whole the loss will not be serious—probably not more than 2,000 over the average mortality.

D. McKinley; Runs 10 and 12; 33,000 acres; 3,400 sheep: The average snowfall was about 2 ft. all over the run. It lay for upwards of three weeks without a break and then thawed and froze again, making the snow into ice and thus rendering it dangerous to attempt to move the sheep. The stock held consisted of 2,000 ewes (price paid for 1,100 of above from Mount Pisa 7s. 6d.