

THE WOOL SUPPLY

The consumption of wool in all departments of the industry in 1900 amounted to nearly 400,000,000 pounds, of which nearly 258,000,000 pounds were of domestic production and over 136,000,000 imported. According to these figures, the annual quantity of new wool used in manufacture had increased 12.3 per cent since 1890, while the annual quantity of shoddy used in the same period had increased as much as 25.8 per cent. During the same year about 3,000,000 pounds were exported. According to government reports, the total foreign product consumed in manufacture for the decade 1891-1900 amounted to nearly 1,600,000,000 pounds, while the domestic wool used in the same period was nearly 2,900,000,000 pounds, or over twice as much as the imported, or over seventy-one per cent of the net supply.

The quantity of wool produced in a given year varies, of course, with numerous conditions, which affect the growth decidedly. Thus, while the product of 1900 was nearly 310,000,000 pounds, that of 1897 was but little over 259,000,000, which was the lowest record since 1881, when the figure was 240,000,000. Thus, although the figures generally run close to 300,000,000 pounds and over, the several poor years pulled the average for the two decades previous to 1900 as low as 283,000,000 pounds. In addition to the large production of sheep wool in this year, the Census shows that an extensive industry in the hair of the angora goat (mohair) has arisen in the United States. According to returns, there were nearly 455,000 of these animals in the country, representing a total product of 361,328 pounds of hair, valued at nearly twenty-eight cents per pound, or nearly \$100,000.