

The saleyards have been regularly attended, and there now being dips in connection with nearly all the yards sheep infested with lice are at once dipped, the result is a marked improvement in the state of the sheep exposed for sale.

The returns of sheep on the 31st May, 1890, showed an increase of 7,144 sheep only. This small increase was owing mainly to the sheepowners not being prepared to meet the increased demand for sheep for export. This demand, however, resulted in a much larger number of lambs being bred last season, and it is expected that the coming returns will still show an increase.

The export of frozen mutton and lamb shows a very large increase, the numbers being 472,909 sheep and 218,297 lambs, being an increase of 289,418 carcasses. Thirty-eight thousand sheep were preserved. The quality has been well maintained, and is likely to improve as breeders now better understand the class of mutton best adapted for the English market. There were also 350 cattle frozen.

The numbers of stock exported are: To Calcutta—Horses, 169. Australia—Horses, 87; cattle, 52; dogs, 113; pigs, 80. There were imported: From Great Britain—Sheep, 7; dogs, 2. From Australia—Sheep, 17; dogs, 3; horses, 7.

Christchurch, 22nd May, 1891.

R. FOSTER, Inspector.

OTAGO DISTRICT.

Stock of all description continue in a healthy condition. The death of a few cattle and two or three horses in the western district, and about 30 head of young cattle on an estate in the Clutha district, have been reported, but the cause has been purely local.

Very little lung-worm has been observed during the last year, and owing to systematic inspection of saleyards and proper dipping being insisted upon, lice is very seldom seen. There have been only eight prosecutions for the whole of Otago during the year.

The proper branding of sheep has also been more fully carried out. There has been eight convictions under this Act.

The lambing was very prolific on all low country in the southern portion of the district, but very stormy weather occurred in October, and greatly reduced the percentage among hill sheep in Wallace and Lake Counties. The long-continued drought and consequent scarcity of succulent feed also militated against the lambing in the northern portions of Otago.

During the year 265,405 frozen carcasses of sheep have been exported, 47,507 preserved, and 4,222 boiled down, and there were twenty-one stud sheep imported from Victoria. Three hundred and eighty-eight head of cattle, principally stud stock, and 176 horses, have been exported to Sydney and Melbourne.

Dunedin, 29th April, 1891.

ALFRED DOUGLASS, Inspector.

APPENDIX A.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT of the Number of Carcases of Frozen Mutton exported from the Colony during the Years ended 31st March, 1884 to 1891.

	Estimate for		1884.	1885.	1886.	1887.	1888.	1889.	1890.	1891.	Over Previous Year.	
	1882.	1883.									In-crease.	De-crease.
Auckland .. ..	..	..	7,968	..	18,561	19,913	..	9,697	7,104	11,236	4,132	..
Napier .. ..	..	..	9,003	89,089	132,700	157,800	155,057	208,335	279,081	471,068	191,987	..
Wellington .. ..	..	..	46,803	130,436	137,964	140,302	209,785	229,466	238,583	407,318	168,735	..
Pictou .. ..	..	..	..	15,950	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Lyttelton .. ..	..	..	80,920	121,627	161,462	235,631	316,455	327,652	401,788	691,206	289,418	..
Oamaru .. ..	..	..	..	..	32,250	..	..	63,103	94,415	88,599	..	5,816
Dunedin .. ..	..	..	86,781	..	..	..	..	134,091	146,837	126,849	..	19,988
Bluff .. ..	..	..	16,297	133,964	91,255	153,321	250,229	40,688	37,255	49,957	12,702	..
Totals	30,488	173,988	247,772	491,066	574,192	706,967	931,526	1,013,032	1,205,063	1,846,233	666,974	25,804
										Less	25,804	
										Total increase	641,170	

APPENDIX B.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT of the Number of Sheep in the Colony, returned annually, under Section 21 of "The Sheep Act, 1878," on the 31st May, 1879 to 1890.

1879	...	...	11,693,911	1885	...	...	14,546,801
1880	...	...	11,530,623	1886	...	...	15,174,263
1881	...	...	12,190,215	1887	...	...	15,155,626
1882	...	...	12,408,106	1888	...	...	15,042,198
1883	...	...	13,306,329	1889	...	...	15,423,328
1884	...	...	13,978,520	1890	...	...	16,116,113

NOTE.—The return of all sheepowners, and the number of sheep and lambs on 30th April, 1891, showing the county in which owners reside and their sheep are depastured, so far as the information is supplied in the Schedule "C" furnished by sheepowners under section 21 of "The Sheep Act, 1890," will be published in the *New Zealand Gazette* as soon as the returns are complete.