

Cross-bred wool has been receiving most attention for some time, this, coupled with the great demand for cross-bred sheep for freezing, has caused breeders to turn their attention to this class to the neglect of pure merinoes. The favourite cross from merino ewes is got by the Leicester ram, and from cross-bred ewes all the different breeds of rams have their advocates. In the North Island the Lincoln has for some years been principally used, but lately the other breeds, such as the Romney, Leicester, and Downs, have been coming to the front. For early freezing lambs, the Downs cross is considered the best; but if any of the ewe lambs have to be kept to replenish the breeding flock, then the question of wool must be considered, the wool from this cross being short and somewhat inferior in quality.

The lambing was above the average, being, say, merino 60 per cent., and other breeds 80 per cent. The satisfactory state in which the ewes came through the winter has had a good deal to do with this, and with the abundance of early feed the lambs received full justice. A large number were thus early fit for freezing, and a total of 343,087 were shipped. This is a question requiring the urgent attention of breeders, whether the present system of indiscriminately sending off the primest ewe lambs will not, in the near future, be a cause for regret, when it is found the flocks are deteriorating for want of young and vigorous blood.

The area of new land requiring stock is also becoming greater every year, and as for this stock must be found, it is feared that in many instances settlers are compelled to breed from old broken down culls, whose constitutions are entirely gone, as they find it impossible to secure young healthy ewes at anything like a reasonable price. Much of the heavy loss reported in certain districts must be attributed to the result of breeding from old ewes or their progeny.

Frozen Mutton and Lamb.—Attached is a table showing the number of carcasses exported from the different shipping ports for the year ending 31st March, 1892. It will be seen there has been a falling off of 78,178 carcasses. This, I think, can fairly be accounted for by the superabundance of feed, and the necessity of again stocking up much of the country on which (owing to the drought) the stock had for several years to be reduced, and also the large area of new country which is being opened up. The people at Home are now beginning to find out the advantage of having such an abundant supply of prime meat at a moderate cost, and this, combined with the increased facilities provided for shipping, storing, distributing, &c., has been the means of creating a larger demand, and of steadier prices being maintained. With care and judgment in the shipping of suitable meat, and the opening of new markets in the provinces, everything points to a largely increased demand in the future.

Disease.—As already mentioned, there has been a considerable mortality amongst the flocks in two or three districts, but it is satisfactory to note that Mr McClean, the Government Veterinarian, after having carefully examined the different cases, is able to report that it is purely of a local nature, and in no way infectious or contagious. His reports will be found attached. The "mysterious" disease, which has existed in the Tauranga District for many years, still causes considerable loss, but, from personal inquiries made, it has not been so troublesome this past season. When in that district, I made inquiries about securing a suitable piece of land, with the view of carrying out some experiments to, if possible, discover a means to combat this trouble; and negotiations are now pending which it is hoped will lead to a successful issue, so that early steps can be taken to commence operations. A pamphlet on the general treatment of sheep has been issued to all sheep-owners, and it is hoped it will be instructive.

Quarantine.—During the year a considerable number of stud sheep have been imported, and have undergone the usual quarantine. They consisted of Lincolns, Leicesters, Romneys, South-downs, Shropshires, and Hampshires, and from advices there is likely to be a continued increase year by year. It is satisfactory to note that sheep-breeders are alive to the necessity of improving their flocks. To encourage this, and to obviate as much as possible the unavoidable delay and expense, the quarantine-grounds have lately been much improved and enlarged. New regulations will also shortly be circulated simplifying the forms, and an endeavour is being made to reduce expenses in connection with the importing of stock.

CATTLE.

By the census returns furnished on the 4th April, 1891, there were 831,831 cattle in the colony, of which number 42,912 were owned by Maoris. The health of the stock has been generally satisfactory. A few cases of cancer, wasters, &c., were reported from several districts, and action was taken to have the beasts destroyed. It cannot, however, be too strongly urged of the absolute necessity of immediately destroying and burying any animal showing the slightest sign of disease. Breeding from such stock is only spreading the evil, and, although it may be a small monetary loss, the welfare of a district demands some sacrifice. I subjoin Mr McClean's report on a visit lately paid to Taranaki.

The market for frozen beef has been fairly satisfactory, and during the twelve months ending 31st March, 1892, there has been shipped from the following ports:—

					Cwt.	Valued at £
Auckland	...	...	...	...	5,969	8,211
Napier	...	...	...	...	11,724	11,947
Wellington	...	...	...	...	65,480	69,594
Poverty Bay	...	...	...	...	4,311	4,024
New Plymouth	...	...	...	...	19,973	19,036
Wanganui	...	...	...	...	2,018	2,352
Lyttelton	...	...	...	...	1,708	1,933
Dunedin	...	...	...	...	13	12
					<hr/> 111,196	<hr/> £117,109

HORSES.

The number in the colony, as taken from the census returns of the 4th April, 1891, was 211,040.

It is to be regretted that there is still great neglect shown in the selection of breeding stock, and to this must be attributed the existence of the large number of weedy animals.

A circular was issued to the various Agricultural and Pastoral Societies in April last year, asking them for an expression of opinion as to the advisability of imposing a tax upon stallions. A number of replies were received, about half of which were in favour of it; but I have every reason to believe that now, if the question were asked, it would be found receiving greater support. This is a matter worthy of the earnest consideration of every breeder of horses.

It is an undeniable fact that, for anything like a good horse, a ready market can always be found at a remunerative price; but for weedy sorts there is very little demand.

Disease.—There have been reports from several districts of the prevalence of the bot fly, and also of horses dying from its effects; but although a few may have died, showing bots in the stomach, yet from the information received it cannot be said to have increased so as to cause any alarm. Inquiries, however, are now being made as to the latest remedies, and when the season approaches it is hoped these will be available for public information.

Subjoined I beg to hand extracts from the reports of the District Inspectors.

I have &c.,

The Hon. J. McKenzie,
Minister of Lands.

JOHN D. RITCHIE, Chief Inspector.

No. 1.

Mortality among Lambs, Hawera District.

SIR,—

Live Stock Department, Wellington, 15th February, 1890.

I have the honour to report having received two sheep from Inspector Monro, from a flock in the Hawera district. All the sheep in this flock are reported to be looking in a very unhealthy state, with many deaths from unknown cause.

I made a careful *post mortem* examination of the two sheep sent, and, without entering into any technical details, I may say I am of opinion they were suffering from "Anæmia" or "poverty of blood."

As to the cause of this, it is perhaps somewhat difficult to give a correct opinion without seeing the flock in its natural condition. This trouble is, however, common in all countries where sheep are kept, and, in this instance, is perhaps due to keeping the sheep on country that has become "sheep sick," so to speak. The food-supply may in a certain sense be abundant, but, on examining it, it will ultimately be found to be inadequately provided with material fitted for the manufacture of healthy blood.

To get these sheep into a healthy state, endeavour must be made to supply the apparent want of the albuminous and tissue-forming elements of the blood. This may be accomplished on the land where the animals are located by an addition to the grasses upon which they are feeding of some easily-digested and nutritive material, such as corn or cake, or the animals may be moved to land of a different character, where the natural food is less likely to induce this condition. A few oats or bran, or a little-linseed cake, seem to answer the purpose well, together with the addition of a little common salt and some preparation of iron, as the sulphate or carbonate, seem to be attended with the best results. With the blood in this state, turnips are to be carefully avoided as being too watery and indigestible.

In conclusion, I may add I was unable to find the parasite described by Mr. Monro, nor can I suggest what it might have been.

I have, &c.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands.

JOHN F. McCLEAN, M.R.C.V.S.,
Government Veterinarian.

No. 2.

Mortality among Lambs in Hawera District.

SIR,—

Live Stock Department, Wellington, 4th April, 1891.

On this subject, which I was engaged investigating from the 3rd to the 14th February, I have very little further to add to my report of last year on a *post mortem* examination of two sheep sent to me to Wellington. I had no opportunity of making a *post mortem* examination of any sheep dying as a result of the disease, which I stated in my last report I believed to be Anæmia. I, however, examined and subsequently killed several that were visibly affected, and am confirmed in the opinion I expressed last year—namely, that these sheep are dying from Anæmia. The cause of this I look upon as being due to the food-supply being deficient in some of the necessary constituents of healthy blood, probably the carbonates of soda, tri-basic phosphates of lime and magnesia, and phosphate of iron. I found numbers of the *Tænia marginata* in their cystic forms (bladder worms), but these are not known to be the cause of any serious trouble among sheep. I have no further remedial measures to point out, except perhaps that, should this disease be persistent, it might be advisable for these farmers to turn their attention to fattening rather than breeding stock with the present heavy losses.

In conclusion, I would draw your attention to an article in the *New Zealand Farmer*, for March, with reference to the prevalence of disease in the Tauranga District. I have not been afforded an opportunity of personally investigating this complaint, but from private correspondence I have no hesitation in saying these two diseases appear to be identical.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Lands,

JOHN F. McCLEAN, M.R.C.V.S.,
Government Veterinarian,

No. 3.

Mortality among Lambs in the Hawera District.

SIR,—

Live Stock Department, Wellington, 30th November, 1891.

I have the honour to report having visited the Hawera-Taranaki District inquiring into losses among sheep. It was this district that was referred to during the debate on the Live Stock Committee's report in the House of Representatives last session, as being the district in which settlers had been compelled to bring up store cattle from Canterbury, being unable to keep sheep owing to the ravages of lungworm. I had the honour of submitting a report last year on the mortality of "weaners" in this district, which I stated was in my opinion due to Anæmia. On this visit settlers still complained of losses among their young sheep, though only in one or two instances had this season's lambs commenced dying. The hoggets, I am informed, had simply continued to pine away all through the winter. I am of opinion these sheep die simply from "inanition," due to the herbage grown on this class of country being totally unfit for rearing sheep. During the spring and early part of summer there is in this district an enormous growth of very rank grasses, in which any sheep-farmer of experience is well aware no class of sheep can thrive, and then when winter comes round there is proportionately as great a scarcity, and the unsuccessful settlers do not appear to make any provision for artificial feeding. This class of country is, to my mind, essentially a cattle country; but, with the prevailing low prices for dairy-produce, and correspondingly high prices of sheep, many settlers have turned their cattle into sheep, in the anticipation of better results. This seems to be a mistake, and done without considering whether the country would be suitable for sheep-farming. Far better would it have been had these settlers co-operated in the establishment of a larger number of dairy factories and to obtain better prices for their produce. Worms do not appear to exist to any great extent, most probably owing to a large part of the country only being recently stocked with sheep; but very few of the settlers know anything about parasites or take any steps to prevent their spread, and in a rich, moist, flat country like this, it can only be expected they will increase. Very few settlers seem to recognise that it is possible for a district to be a first-class district for fattening stock, yet totally unsuitable for rearing sheep. This, to my mind, is the condition of this country. I am of opinion sheep ought to be carried on this country for purpose of fattening only, or if the margin between the price of store and fat sheep be too small, and it is thought desirable to rear a crop of lambs, let the lambs be either sold as freezers or sent to another district altogether where they can be reared more successfully. No class of sheep ought to be kept in these districts more than one season, and while there should receive a continual change of paddocking. . . . I have, &c.,

JOHN F. McCLEAN, M.R.C.V.S.,

Government Veterinarian.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands.

No. 4.

Re "*Tauranga Sheep Disease.*"

SIR,—

Live Stock Department, Wellington, 15th August, 1891.

I have the honour to report that, acting on your instructions, I visited the Tauranga District in June last for the purpose of making an inquiry into the cause of the mortality prevailing among flocks in that district. This so-called "disease" is almost wholly confined to lambs, and has, I am told, caused the deaths of from 60 to 90 per cent. yearly since somewhere about the year 1869. It is, I presume, unnecessary for me to enter into a detailed description of the history, symptoms, and distribution of this affection, as this information has already been given correctly and in full in newspaper reports on this subject. At the time of my visit the deaths had ceased for this year, and I was unable to obtain lambs for *post mortem* examination that had died of the "Tauranga disease." My visit was therefore principally confined to examining the flocks, their surroundings and management generally. I saw lambs said to be recovering from the disease, and killed and examined several; the appearances in all instances were those due to Inanition, accompanied with parasitic invasion. The parasites generally were the flat and round worms common to sheep in all districts; but the presence of the larvæ of the "sheep fly" in the nostrils was especially noticeable, over a hundred specimens of this parasite being found in the nostrils of all the lambs examined by me. Except in one or two noticeable instances, "external parasites" in the shape of lice and ticks were prevalent to an extent denoting a great amount of carelessness amongst the owners.

The whole of the affected area is of a poor, sandy character, and was at the time of my visit very bare; and there likewise appeared to me to be almost a total absence of any provision for wintering the stock. The pastures generally are naturally poor; but I could detect no weed or herb of an injurious character. I am therefore of opinion that these lambs are dying from Inanition, due, primarily, to a want of suitable nourishment, and, secondarily, to the exhaustion caused by the various parasites which follow as a natural sequence on their debilitated condition. The fact that stock that have been removed to other pastures before becoming seriously reduced in strength have rapidly recovered, is to my mind conclusive evidence that the affection is simply dietetic, and that the only means of reducing these losses to a minimum consists most essentially in constant and careful change of pastures, and in improving the same, together with the providing of good winter feed in the shape of ensilage, hay, and turnips; dosing for worms carefully and early; regular dipping; and in paying far more attention to the general welfare of the flocks than they at present appear to receive.

In conclusion, I have to express my thanks to Messrs. Crump, Seddon, and Stock Inspector Clifton, for their kindness and trouble in affording me every facility for prosecuting this inquiry.

I have, &c.,

JOHN F. McCLEAN, M.R.C.V.S.,

Government Veterinarian.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands.

Report No. 5.

"Tauranga Disease."

SIR,—

Live Stock Department, Wellington, — February, 1892.

In accordance with your instructions, I again visited the Tauranga District during the months of December and January last, for the purpose of making further inquiry into the cause of the mortality prevailing there among young sheep stock. I visited Tauranga at this time of the year because it is from November to February that the mortality among the lambs is reported to be greatest. From what I was enabled to observe, lambs appear to thrive fairly well until the ewes begin to fail in their milk-supply; then, unless the lambs be removed to another district, or be liberally supplied with artificial food, they pine away and die. The only *post mortem* appearances in lambs so dying—provided they be of a flock that has by careful dosing been kept free from parasites—are those of "Inanition."

Now, I would submit that if lambs kept free from parasites, but not artificially fed, die, and that artificially fed lambs do not die, surely this is evidence enough that the natural herbage of this country is insufficient for rearing healthy sheep. As to why this is so, I can hardly say—it may in some measure be due to the geological formation of this country, or perhaps to the want or excess of some mineral matter in the animal economy. However, it must be borne in mind that this is not a solitary instance of country on which it is found impossible to rear sheep; there are all over the world similar tracts of land on which sheep-breeding can only be carried on with the aid of artificial food-stuffs.

I am informed that grown sheep fatten readily on this country. Would it not pay, then, to fatten off sheep from the Waikato which are at present being fattened there at the cost of country that would be more profitably employed in breeding stock; or, if the Tauranga settler prefers to keep breeding ewes, why not sell off ewes and lambs every year, soon after shearing, and buy again for the following season a fresh lot of ewes?

The establishment of a small experimental farm in this district would no doubt be of benefit in determining the possibility of making sheep-farming in any form pay; but it appears to me such a farm, to be of any real service, would necessarily have to be conducted on a theoretical as well as a practical basis.

I have, &c.,

JOHN F. McCLEAN, M.R.C.V.S.,

Government Veterinarian.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands.

No. 6.

Mortality among Sheep in Feilding District.

SIR,—

Live Stock Department, Wellington, 30th November, 1891.

I have the honour to report for you information that I visited the Feilding District to inquire into the mortality prevailing there among a large number of flocks. I also visited a few flocks in the Wairarapa, where losses from the same cause had also occurred. This mortality seems to be wholly confined to the ewe flocks, and in some instances has reached a very high percentage. In many flocks the deaths are reported to have commenced about a month before lambing, and in others not until three weeks or a month subsequent to lambing. In all the flocks I examined where deaths had taken place I found all the sheep looking generally out of sorts. Some, it was reported, would die suddenly, and others linger for a day or two; but all cases were characterized by the rapid manner in which decomposition set in after death. I made many careful *post mortem* examinations, and am of opinion the cause of death in all instances was a degeneration of the liver, simulating to my mind, in far the larger number of cases, the disease described in the human being as "Acute yellow atrophy," and in the remaining cases a degeneration of a fatty character seemed to be the cause of death. . . . This would appear to be caused most probably from errors in dieting, such, for instance, as the presence of too proportionately large a quantity of saccharine materials in the herbage, and absence of nitrogenous constituents, due, perhaps, to the influence of the past season, together with ewes during the latter period of gestation not taking a sufficient amount of exercise, unless compelled to seek their feed, which previous to this mortality had been over-abundant. In several instances the attention of owners has been drawn to the sheep eating clay. This would seem to indicate that previously they had suffered from attacks of congestion of the liver, due to the same causes—viz., stimulating food and want of sufficient exercise.

From the above you will understand I do not consider the disease in any sense infectious or contagious; and, as this mortality has, in several newspapers, been described as "Anthrax, or Cumberland," doubtless from the apparent similarity of the *ante* and *post mortem* appearances as described by settlers to the text-book descriptions of "Anthrax," I would inform you that I made a careful microscopical search for *Bacilli anthracis*, as well as a series of inoculations, but obtained only negative results. The only deduction to be drawn from the results of this investigation is that it would seem desirable in plentiful seasons such as the past, to keep lambing ewes on pastures of not too luxuriant a nature, so as to insure their having to take that amount of exercise so essential to their general good health.

I have, &c.,

JOHN F. McCLEAN, M.R.C.V.S.,

Government Veterinarian.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands.

No. 7.

SIR,—

Live Stock Department, Wellington, — March, 1892.

I have the honour to inform you that during the past year I have visited certain parts of the West Coast district, where the department had been informed many wether sheep were suffering from some urinary trouble. I examined a number of flocks and found several sheep suffering from what appeared to be inability to micturate owing to the orifice of the prepuce having gradually

become obliterated, and the "glans" destroyed, as a result of diseased action; subsequently, an abscess appeared to form somewhere in the line of the urethral canal, from which urine constantly trickling caused excoriation of all the neighbouring parts. As a result the sheep get into a very low state, many dying of rupture of the abdominal walls. The cause of this trouble I have been unable yet to determine; but, should any more reports of this complaint appearing be received, I hope to be afforded an opportunity of making further investigation. At the present time I am informed that it is difficult to find any sheep suffering.

I have, &c.,

JOHN F. McCLEAN, M.R.C.V.S.,

The Hon. the Minister of Lands.

Government Veterinarian.

No. 8.

Mortality among Cattle, Stratford.

SIR,—

Live Stock Department, Wellington, 27th May, 1892.

I have the honour to report having visited the district between Hawera and Taranaki, for the purpose of inquiring into the mortality prevailing there amongst young cattle. From the examinations I made I am of opinion the chief cause of death is Tuberculosis in one form or another, and I would therefore advise that the departmental circular on this subject be again distributed among the farmers of this district. The evils of breeding from animals of doubtful health, and the necessity of supplying cattle with extra food and shelter, are there pointed out. I would also direct your attention to the necessity of having the provisions of "The Cattle Act, 1890," strictly enforced, especially as regards the destruction of diseased stock found in saleyards; and in performing this duty in the Hawera-Taranaki district one Inspector would be kept very well employed.

When in Hawera, I was afforded an opportunity of addressing the members of the Egmont Agricultural and Pastoral Society on this subject, and all agreed on the necessity of stringent measures being taken to prevent the extension of this malady, and there is no doubt that if the members of this society co-operate for this purpose much good will be done.

I have, &c.,

JOHN F. McCLEAN, M.R.C.V.S.,

The Hon. the Minister of Lands.

Government Veterinarian.

THE following are the annual reports of the Inspectors for the different districts of the colony for the year ending the 31st March, 1892:—

AUCKLAND DISTRICT.

As the last sheep known to be scabby was killed at Miranda in November, 1889, it may be fairly assumed that the Auckland flocks are now free from disease.

The mortality resulting from the prevalence of internal parasites still continues, perhaps somewhat abated, but not nearly so much as it might be if farmers would only realise that the improved treatment of lambs, particularly at weaning, and more careful drenching, would reduce this loss to a minimum.

The mortality at Tauranga among lambs has been considerably reduced this season; the factors being more careful treatment and more general drenching, assisted in two instances by the use of medicated licks.

In three flocks, where the result of altered treatment has been perhaps most successful, the following course has been followed:—

On No. 1.—The lambs were not bred on the farm where treated; and although the farm on which they were bred is in the area affected with the so-called disease, the change was doubtless beneficial; and, again, the farm to which they were brought has probably the best sheep-pasture in the district. The specially additional treatment was repeated dosing with Larney's anthelmintic.

On No. 2.—The lambs here had a medicated lick of chlorate of potash, sulphate of iron, and salt always before them, and were weaned on turnips with chaff and grain. They were drenched three times with turpentine and oil, and seven times with Larney's. It cannot be said perhaps that the lambs were worth the treatment, but they now look well and the mortality has not been excessive.

On No. 3.—The lambs have had access to the medicated lick, as recommended by Mr. McClean, M.R.C.V.S. All have been dosed with Larney's. They have been kept, as far as possible, on fresh short grass, or sheep-feed, as against long rank grass or cattle-feed. These lambs lost condition after the first summer rain, but improved again as soon as the grass hardened.

By these owners Larney's is considered a specific.

Captain Clark and some others have followed the usual practice and sent their lambs to Katikati. They claim to get the same results by this change that others only arrive at by so much care, and then only at a much greater cost.

Auckland, 31st March, 1892.

E. CLIFTON, Inspector.

NAPIER DISTRICT.

Sheep.—Sheep are generally in a very satisfactory condition; the lambing was quite up to the average; the clip was in very good condition. I anticipate rather a heavy loss amongst the hoggets, owing to the unusual quantity of rain and the washy state of the feed. Dipping has been generally carried out.

Cattle and Horses.—I have no particular remarks to make about cattle and horses. They are all in good condition and healthy as far as I know.

Napier, 9th June, 1892.

R. C. PASLEY, Inspector.

WELLINGTON—WEST COAST DISTRICT.

Horses have during this period been in good health generally, and there have been no further losses reported from pyæmia following upon strangles as occurred last year.

Cattle.—The health of cattle in the Wellington portion of this district has been good. In the more northern portion of the West Coast District there has, however, been a considerable mortality among young cattle. This has been reported by the Government Veterinarian to have been principally due to tuberculosis, brought on in his opinion by the unfair treatment this class of stock are subjected to.

Many settlers in this district are content to try and rear their young calves on separated milk, without the addition of any heat-producing material to take the place of the butter-fat extracted therefrom. This, together with the fact that only in very exceptional cases is any reasonable shelter afforded, would, in the Veterinarian's opinion, be liable to predispose young stock to a wasting disease such as tuberculosis.

Sheep.—Owing to the favourable season and fine winter the health of sheep generally has been good. There was a very unusual mortality among breeding-ewes in very many flocks in the Rangitikei and Wairarapa Districts. Strong and apparently healthy ewes were found to be dying quite suddenly in considerable numbers, and many persons who attempted to ascertain the cause of death from text-book descriptions of diseases were of opinion it was anthrax or Cumberland disease.

The cause of this mortality was reported on by the Veterinarian to have been due to degeneration of the liver, principally of a "fatty" character, caused in his opinion by excess of stimulating food with insufficient exercise. From this it would appear possible that a season so favourable to the growth of plant life as the last may, to a limited extent, be detrimental to the welfare of certain classes of stock.

No satisfactory cause has as yet been arrived at accounting for the mortality prevailing among what would appear to be the strongest and most thriving lambs, mentioned in my last annual report as occurring among many flocks in the South Wairarapa. In the season just past this mortality again occurred in the Wairarapa, and also unfortunately extended to a large number of flocks on the West Coast. Neither, as yet, has the cause of the urinary trouble prevailing among wethers, particularly in the Rangitikei County, been ascertained.

Here I cannot help expressing the regret I feel that settlers should endeavour to conceal from this department their losses among their stock, although they themselves have no idea of the causes of death. It is doubtless done on account of the idea prevailing that it would be to the detriment of their properties if such were known. There are, no doubt, large numbers of stock lost annually, wholly from preventable causes; and if the owners can be brought to see that it is really to their interest to communicate with this department, whose object is to conserve their interests, much good to the stock-raising industry will result.

There are at present indications of foot-rot—by this I mean, true contagious foot-rot, as distinct from foot-rot caused by overgrowth of horn structures—being very troublesome this coming winter. I trust, however, that settlers, by adopting the precautions pointed out to them in the pamphlet issued by this department, will be enabled to reduce their loss from this cause to a minimum.

Internal parasites have been a fruitful source of annoyance to careless stockowners; but until they recognise that in this case "prevention is better than cure," and work systematically on this principle, they must not expect to be free from this pest. The favourable season just over, together with ordinary care and attention, has reduced the number of lice-infested sheep very considerably.

Lambs and Wool.—There has, throughout the whole district, been an excellent lambing, and in consequence of the abundance of feed the wool clip appears to have been well up to the average.

I have, &c.,

Wellington, April, 1892.

JOHN DRUMMOND, Inspector.

MARLBOROUGH—NELSON DISTRICT.

Sheep.—Throughout the district the sheep remain free from scab. I have not seen the insect since September, 1889, nor have I heard of any suspicion of its being now in existence. A few flocks are slightly infected with lice, but to no serious extent, the sheep being dipped as soon as disease is discovered, or as soon as possible after shearing, many of the small sheepowners making it a rule now to dip their sheep every year. Lungworm is beginning to be more prevalent than formerly, and many owners have had to dose their hoggets with turpentine and oil. The pamphlet lately issued by the department will, I am informed, be of great service to many of the sheepowners. The clip in a few cases was light, but in most satisfactory. The lambing in all cases has I am informed been good. During the year there has been 13,017 frozen sheep exported, this being the second season, the first being in 1885, when the industry in the district commenced. The number is small compared to other districts, but it has been a boon to sheepowners, and, now that freezing works are being erected at Spring Creek, I have no doubt but the number will soon double. Hitherto the sheep have been frozen on a hulk lying at Picton. About 2,500 of the above were driven overland from Nelson District *via* Rai Valley to Picton.

Horses.—As no returns are made of horses I am unable to give the number in the district. No serious disease has shown itself, although last winter many were attacked with strangles, or a severe cold, which in many cases made the animals unfit for work for about a fortnight, after which they recovered.

Cattle.—No serious disease has shown itself, although a few head have been destroyed suffering from cancerous sores. The season being exceptionally fine and mild, there has been abundance of feed.

I have, &c.,

Nelson, 30th May, 1892.

T. G. RICHARDSON, Inspector.

CANTERBURY-KAIKOURA DISTRICT.

Sheep.—The past season having been one of the finest on record, the winter dry though cold, with a moist spring, which brought a great flush of grass, the flocks have come in as a whole in a satisfactory manner. The clip was not so good as might have been expected, being light, very little weight in the wool, and in instances broken; it would be about an average. The percentage of lambs throughout the district would be about 75 per cent. This would have been much larger but for a few days of severe winter which caught some of the late lambing flocks and caused heavy loss. In one flock alone the loss was estimated at 20 per cent. The season having been moist throughout, grass has been abundant, and the flocks look well, but would have done better with less moisture and more substance in the grass. The first large sale of sheep in the district was held on 3rd March, when between 17,000 and 18,000 were quitted at satisfactory prices, varying from 14s. 6d. for cross-bred prizes to 2s. 6d. for old merino culls. A large number of first-cross sheep are now being bred in the district, and the number is likely to increase from year to year.

Health.—The wet season has been conducive to foot-rot, which has shown up on all the low-lying country, and in one case on high country, but heavy in grass. The arsenic trough and Little's dip are being used with good results.

Lungworm.—The loss by lungworm was much smaller than usual, the generality of farmers dosing the lambs soon after weaning, a wise precautionary measure.

Lice.—Two or three small flocks have shown lice, but the annual dipping in general practice keeps it at a very low ebb.

Cattle.—Few cattle are bred here, and very little dairying is done. Very little attention is paid to breed, and what cattle are in the district are healthy: with the exception of one case of cancer, no disease is among them.

Horses.—The horses in the district are, I believe, perfectly healthy.

I have, &c.,

Kaikoura, 20th May, 1892.

JOHN MOORE, Inspector.

Sheep.—As far as I have been able to see since my arrival the health of the flocks is good, and the sheep are all in good condition. Lambing was also up to the average. Clip was in good order, except on some of the back runs where there was a large amount of sandy wool.

Foot-rot, owing to the wet season and strong growth of grass, has made its appearance in places where it has not been seen previously; but in all cases owners have taken steps to deal with the outbreak.

Lice.—I have not yet seen any sheep infected with these parasites.

Waiau, 3rd May, 1892.

W. A. SCAIFE, Inspector.

Sheep.—The general condition of the flocks has been exceptionally good. Owing to the spring and summer rains the growth in feed practically received no check, and both on the high country and in the agricultural districts grass has been more plentiful than for several years past.

Lambing.—The lambing was decidedly above the average all over the district, and, in spite of the drain on the flocks caused by the frozen meat export, I anticipate an increase, though not a large one.

Wool.—The clip of wool was generally sound and in good condition.

Lice.—A decided improvement is noticeable in this respect. Close inspection of saleyards, and compulsory dipping of all sheep found infected, not only in saleyards but on farms, has borne very good results.

Worms and foot-rot.—For several years these diseases have been in very mild proportions; but they are both of them this season more serious.

Cattle.—The health and condition of cattle has been generally good. Several cattle have been ordered to be destroyed at the saleyards. Two of the cases were of animals in a very advanced stage of tuberculosis, and two of actinomycosis. I have so far no reason to suppose that these diseases are at all general.

I have, &c.,

Christchurch, 6th June, 1892.

R. F. HOLDERNESS, Inspector.

A few sudden deaths of horses, attributed to bot fly, have been mentioned in local papers, but I have not had an opportunity of seeing any cases myself, and am not aware of any proper *post mortem* examination having been made.

Feed is abundant throughout the district, and sheep have been very free from lungworm or other parasites, but incipient foot-rot or scalds has been rather prevalent owing to excessive moisture on cultivated pastures during the last two or three months.

The lambing was rather above the average, and the clip satisfactory.

Prices of store sheep still rule high, and I much fear that the too common practice of selling the best ewe lambs and maiden ewes for freezing—retaining old worn-out ewes for breeding purposes—will militate against a high standard for fat stock before long.

The saleyards of late have been full of old merino ewes which ought to have gone to the boiling-pot.

Timaru, 31st May, 1892.

ALFRED DOUGLASS, Inspector.

OTAGO DISTRICT.

Sheep.—The health of sheep has been good. The lambing has been good, the season having been favourable—average, about 65 per cent. The clip has been satisfactory; lungworm not troublesome; lice to be found occasionally; dipping generally carried out. A great scarcity of sheep exists, and high prices are ruling for all classes. Feed in abundance throughout the country.

Cattle.—A few cases of cancerous tumours on the jaw in cattle have come under my notice, but I have succeeded in getting the animals destroyed.

Horses.—No disease of any fatal description exists. Fears are entertained that the bot-fly may become a serious trouble.

Oamaru, 30th May, 1892.

W. MILLER, Inspector.

Sheep.—All flocks healthy and in good condition for wintering. About half a dozen cases of lousy sheep in Burnside saleyards last winter, in all of which informations were laid and convictions obtained. A few cases of unbranded sheep, in which informations were laid and convictions obtained in all but one. The lambing was good, and had it not been for heavy snow-storms soon after lambing began on the back country, it would have been exceptionally good. As it is I should estimate the increase at about 70 per cent. all over the district. The clip was in good order, but owing to the prevailing cold weather was rather light.

Cattle.—The general health of the herds was good. There were two head in the Burnside saleyards last winter affected with cancer, also one at Otakia, all of which were destroyed and the carcasses sent to the chemical works or buried.

Horses.—All in good health.

Dunedin, 31st May, 1892.

W. A. SCAIFE, Inspector.

General Health.—Stock very healthy and in good condition; feed being abundant throughout the year. Found two cattle with cancer; they were destroyed. Horses healthy throughout the district.

Lambing.—Good, the season very favourable. Crossbreds about 85 per cent.; merinos, 60. Clip sound and in good order.

Lungworm.—Have noticed very few lambs affected.

Lice.—Few flocks infected; dipping general.

Balclutha, 2nd June, 1892.

BLAIR FULLARTON, Inspector.

The health of the stock in Vincent and Lake Counties has been good; have neither seen nor heard of lungworm or any other disease. The lambing has been about 65 per cent. in merinos, and 85 in cross-breds, which is about 15 per cent. higher than last year. This has enabled the sheep-owners to cull heavily this season, which should tell very much to their advantage next season. The clip has been good, averaging 6½ lb. merino, and 8 lb. cross-bred. The returns as coming to hand show an increase by last year, notwithstanding the large number that have been sold out of the district.

Cattle are not on the increase, they are giving place to sheep. Their health and condition is good.

Horses are not bred to any extent in this district. Health good, but mostly of an inferior stamp.

I may mention that this has been an exceptional good season for feed, hence stock of all descriptions are in good condition.

Clyde, 24th May, 1892.

ALEX. IRONSIDE, Inspector.

Flocks.—The sheep flocks are in an exceptionally good state owing to an abundance of grass. The past season, in the opinion of the oldest settlers, has been the best experienced in the district since rabbits became numerous. This result was produced by the really grand-growing warm weather which followed the numerous spring and summer rains. The average clip of wool is 6lb. per sheep. The average lambing is 75 per cent. These figures are arrived at by taking twelve of the stock-owners, six large owners and six small ones, and striking an average. Sheep have increased considerably in the district, both by being bred and by new owners purchasing.

Lungworm.—A few cases of lungworm have come under my knowledge, generally traced to over-stocking, and thus keeping lambs on dirty pasture. The deaths have not been numerous, and lambs have invariably improved after being dosed and moved to clean feed. As usual, owners differ as to the best dose to use in case of lungworm.

Lice.—Lice this season were numerous, probably owing to wet—not really bad in any one place, but scattered through the flocks. Owners, I am glad to say, recognise the fact that lice ruin a flock, and therefore this season they are dipping extensively.

Horned Cattle.—Cattle, as a rule, are fetching low prices, although as a sample of fat stock they could not well be surpassed. Disease is not at all common, although I have had to deal with a case or two of cancer.

Horses.—Horses are fetching a good price, especially good hacks. No disease that I am aware of. Some really first-class draughts are produced in this district.

Tapanui, 25th May, 1892.

R. H. HASSALL, Inspector.

The last season has been one of the best known for many years past as regards stock generally, but more especially sheep. During the winter the weather was fine as a whole, and not the usual heavy rain and snow-storms, so that the flocks, by the time spring arrived and lambing set in, were in good fettle to stand the trial, and the result was one of the most prolific seasons ever known in Southland and Wallace. Not only were large percentages dropped, but, attended with a fine dry spring, the lambs thrived, and arrived at maturity with but a very low death-rate. Following on such a good winter and spring, it was only natural that there was a good clip of wool. A slight mortality took place among some of the flocks in the Western District, but as soon as the spring set in and the sheep were able to have a change of pasturage that disappeared.

Lice I have found very prevalent all over my district, and have impressed upon the settlers that they will have to be more careful in keeping their sheep healthy and dipping them; and I trust that next season I shall not have so much cause of complaint.

Foot-rot and Lungworm have not been very bad, except in a few places. Flock-masters are realising more and more the importance of clean pastures and a general liberal treatment of young stock.

The increase in sheep altogether in my district has been very great the last year, on account of the carrying capacity of the land improving, more people going in for sheep, and more land being taken up. The average increase in merino sheep was about 50 to 60 per cent., and cross-breds about 90 per cent.

Cattle.—With the exception of three cases of cancer which came under my notice, and which in each instance the beast was destroyed, the general health has been good.

Invercargill, May, 1892. H. T. TURNER, 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 1892.

	Estimate for		1884.	1885.	1886.	1887.	1888.	1889.	1890.	1891.	1892.	Over Previous Year.	
	1882.	1883.										Increase.	Decrease.
Auckland	7,968	..	18,561	19,913	..	9,697	7,104	11,236	18,553	7,322	..
Napier	9,003	89,089	132,700	157,800	155,057	208,335	279,081	471,068	282,181	..	188,887
Wellington	46,803	130,439	137,964	140,302	209,785	229,466	238,583	407,318	320,615	..	86,703
Poverty Bay	50,061	50,061	..
New Plymouth	8,195	8,195	..
Wanganui	40,842	40,842	..
Pictou	15,950	..	..	..	..	..	..	13,507	13,507	..
Lyttelton and Ch'ch	80,920	121,627	161,462	235,631	316,455	327,652	401,788	691,206	531,873	..	159,333
Timaru	32,250	..	..	63,103	94,415	88,599	118,701	30,102	..
Oamaru	134,091	146,837	126,849	109,963	..	16,886
Dunedin	86,781	133,964	91,255	153,321	250,229	40,688	37,255	49,957	119,825	69,868	..
Bluff and In'cargill	16,297	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Totals	30,488	173,988	247,772	491,069	574,192	706,967	931,526	1,013,032	1,205,063	1,846,233	1,768,055	373,631	451,809

APPENDIX B.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT of the Number of Sheep in the Colony, returned annually, 1880 to 1891.

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
1885	...	...	14,546,801	1891	...	...	16,753,752

NOTE.—The return of all sheepowners, and the number of sheep and lambs on 30th April, 1892, 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.

APPENDIX C.

NUMBER of OWNERS, Year 1882 to 1891.

Owning—	1882.	1883.	1884.	1885.	1886.	1887.	1888.	1889.	1890.	1891.
Under 500 sheep ...	4,685	5,039	5,422	5,622	6,024	6,247	6,579	7,054	7,662	8,272
500 and under 1,000	844	970	1,033	1,146	1,189	1,139	1,182	1,381	1,528	1,691
1,000 " 2,000	552	609	672	718	747	723	794	826	854	969
2,000 " 5,000	416	467	473	505	532	531	524	597	586	666
5,000 " 10,000	225	244	256	270	263	289	287	277	233	287
10,000 " 20,000	209	200	211	213	228	221	213	239	236	239
20,000 and upwards ...	133	149	154	157	166	166	166	151	160	169
Totals ...	7,064	7,678	8,221	8,631	9,149	9,316	9,745	10,525	11,309	12,293

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