

under the provisions of the Slaughtering and Inspection Act. This made the total amount for which the Consolidated Fund became liable during the year £26,189, being an increase of £591 on the previous year's figures.

IMPORTATION OF STUD STOCK FROM ABROAD.

The prohibition on the importation of cattle and sheep from the United Kingdom was lifted temporarily in June last (1923), but owing to further serious outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease the embargo had to be quickly reimposed. During the period the prohibition was lifted, considerable numbers of valuable stud stock—sheep and cattle—were imported from the United Kingdom, and some cattle of dairy breeds were also imported from Canada, and (by special permission of the Hon. Minister) from the United States of America. The following are the importations, not including sheep (principally Merinos), from Australia, of which there were a number: Cattle (dairy breeds), 105; sheep, 140; swine, 6. In addition a number of horses were imported.

DESTRUCTION OF THE KEA.

During the year the subsidy of 5s. per beak was continued to be paid for the destruction of the kea, and 4,023 beaks were paid for. Since the subsidy was raised to 5s. in October, 1920, 16,644 keas have been paid for.

INSPECTION OF DAIRY PREMISES SUPPLYING MILK FOR CONSUMPTION.

The inspection and licensing of all dairy premises and herds supplying milk for local consumption has been energetically carried on throughout the year. The work, including the inspection of the herds, so far as the chief centres of population are concerned, is carried out under the direct control of capable Veterinary Officers, and a considerable improvement generally in the conditions is reported. Many of the premises are still more or less short of present-day requirements, but so long as they are kept in a clean condition, and reasonable improvements, as conditions will allow, are effected, the officers cannot act in too arbitrary a manner in the matter of condemning them outright. Up-to-date and model premises are in their way very necessary and advisable but in milk-production, more perhaps than anything else, the human element must be reckoned with. A naturally dirty and careless person can never be made clean, and so it happens that milk coming from older premises often compares more than favourably with milk coming from new and up-to-date premises; but notwithstanding this the need for improvement is never lost sight of.

With a view of eliminating any possible risk of tubercular animals being retained in dairy herds, the utmost care is taken by the Inspectors by subjecting the cows to careful clinical examination, testing any suspicious animals, and also collecting samples of the collective milk from the dairy for submitting to the test for tubercle bacilli. In addition to testing suspicious animals, use is often made of the tuberculin test to test whole herds, with the acquiescence of owners, or a percentage of the herds, and owing to the precautions taken the risk of conveying disease by means of the tubercular cow is reduced to a minimum.

IMPORTATION OF ANIMAL-MANURES.

The supervision of the sterilization of all animal-manures for shipment to New Zealand from licensed mills in New South Wales and in India, with the object of prevention of the introduction of anthrax through the medium of imported animal-manure, was carried out as usual during the year. The importation of bone manure from New South Wales was in excess of that for the previous year by 1,309 tons, while that from India amounted to 825 tons, being 75 tons in excess of the previous year's supplies.

VETERINARY LABORATORY.

Mr. H. A. Reid, F.R.C.V.S., Officer in Charge of the Veterinary Laboratory, has been absent from the Dominion during most of the year under review, but the work has been carried on during his absence with unceasing energy by the permanent Laboratory staff. In December, Mr. C. S. M. Hopkirk, who was formerly Assistant at the Laboratory, and had returned to New Zealand from the Melbourne Veterinary School where he had obtained his degree in Veterinary Surgery, was appointed Acting Officer in Charge.

A very satisfactory amount of work has been performed, both in the ordinary bacteriological examination of specimens received, and in prosecuting research and investigational work. During the year, 1,522 specimens were received for examination, comprising 794 milk specimens for examination for contagious mammitis, 155 for the biological test for tubercle bacilli, 241 blood specimens for examination for contagious abortion, 119 specimens from Stock Inspectors, the remainder being of a miscellaneous pathological nature. There were also received a number of specimens connected with dairy bacteriology, concerning which some work has been undertaken of late in conjunction with the Dairy Division. An investigation as to the cause underlying the complaint of sterility in dairy cows, now troublesome among cows in dairying districts, is in progress. Field Officers' observations had narrowed the field of work to granular vaginitis and contagious abortion, but the *Bacillus abortus* (Bang) has now been eliminated as a factor in sterility as the result of the examination of a number of blood specimens from herds where vaginitis was prevalent. The form of sterility present therefore appears to be the result of granular vaginitis. Various methods of treatment of affected animals have been tried, but nothing better than simple astringents used in the acute stage has so far been ascertained. During the year, 71,250 doses of blackleg vaccine prepared at the Laboratory were sent out to officers. An improvement in the method of putting up this material for use in the field was inaugurated by Mr. A. Kidd, Chief Assistant.