

SESS. II.—1891.
NEW ZEALAND.

LIVE-STOCK AND RABBITS COMMITTEE

(REPORT OF THE).

Report brought up, and ordered to be printed.

Your Committee have the honour to report that they have inquired into the various matters relating to stock, referred to them, and in doing so have felt they were free from one of the chief causes of anxiety to Committees previously appointed—viz., the necessity for the consideration of scab.

They confidently express the hope that at no distant date a free interchange of stock will take place between New Zealand and other countries on lines of perfect safety.

This desirable object can, in the opinion of your Committee, be best attained by maintaining relations of reciprocity with Australia on all matters relating to quarantine, and by giving effect to the following resolutions, which your Committee unanimously adopted:—

1. That in the opinion of this Committee the proclamation by Cattle Boards of private premises as quarantine grounds for imported stock, under clauses 20 and 21 of "The Diseased Cattle Act, 1881," constitutes a grave public danger, by virtually abolishing all safeguards against the introduction of disease, and that the Government should immediately amend the law so as to withdraw powers which directly conflict with the general quarantine regulations agreed upon with the Australian Colonies.

2. That the Government be requested to negotiate with the several Australian Governments with a view of including the time occupied in the ocean transit of stock in the ninety days provided in the regulations for quarantine within this colony.

3. That the Government be urged to take the necessary steps towards lessening the almost prohibitive expense hitherto imposed upon imported stock while undergoing quarantine.

4. That the Government be requested to declare the colony free from scab at the earliest possible date compatible with the engagements understood to have been entered into at the Sydney Stock Conference.

During the session of 1890 the Committee (which was then a joint one, composed of both Houses) devoted considerable attention to the alleged prevalence of cancer and tuberculosis in stock slaughtered for food, as well as in cows used for dairy purposes, and valuable evidence was taken, upon which the report was framed.

Your Committee regrets that it was impossible to take up the question this year, but in consideration of its great importance they would suggest that the Government should carefully consider during the recess the question of inspection of slaughterhouses and dairies, and of such cattle as are slaughtered for human food.

Your Committee desire to bring under the notice of the Government the indisputable fact that a slaughterhouse can only become a nuisance to those residing in its vicinity through the gross mismanagement of the persons in charge. Modern experience in England and America, as well as in this colony, amply proves this.

Your Committee express their satisfaction at the increase of the number of sheep in the Colony notwithstanding the rapid growth in the export of frozen meat; but they regret they had no time to discuss the probable injury to our flocks from the exportation of the ewe lambs which are the first to mature. It is a question which is obviously worthy of serious attention.

Your Committee took no evidence on the question of the rabbit-pest, but they are pleased to learn from reports sent in to the Head Office of the Stock Department, by the Inspectors of the various districts, that the pest is not increasing in numbers.

Your Committee heard evidence given by a deputation from the Hurunui Rabbit Board asking for assistance on the pound-for-pound principle, to erect rabbit-fences; but as this involved the protection of private estates as well as Crown lands held as runs within the Midland Railway area, your Committee advises that a sum of money be placed on the estimates for this purpose, but not