

SESS. II.—1891.
NEW ZEALAND.

INSPECTION OF STOCK.

(ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE INSPECTORS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1891.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

SIR,— Live Stock Department, Wellington, 31st July, 1891.
I have the honour to hand you herewith the annual reports for the different districts of the colony for the year ending the 31st March, 1891.

The Hon. J. McKenzie,
Minister of Lands and Agriculture.

I have, &c.,
JOHN D. RITCHIE, Chief Inspector.

AUCKLAND DISTRICT.

THERE is now no serious disease affecting sheep in this district. The Miranda sheep were examined during the month of March and found clean. In Tauranga there is each year a considerable loss among lambs during the period between the end of November and the end of March, that is not satisfactorily accounted for, and there seems to be some other cause than lung-worm, the usually accepted reason or cause given for losses among lambs.

Lice.—In this district lice are more prevalent than they are usually found to be in other parts of the colony; it is probably owing to the practice of continually buying and selling sheep so much in favour among owners here; and possibly the warm climate of Auckland, with its great rainfall, is exceptionally favourable to the increase of this parasite.

Sheep.—This year there will again be found a large increase in the number of sheep, also a particularly large increase in the number of stockowners, for the smaller landowners are beginning to realise the value of sheep.

The Waikato can this year absorb a larger number of sheep for grazing than it can obtain from Hawke's Bay, and in this part of the Auckland district an increasing acreage of land under roots is each year being laid down. This season roots (chiefly turnips) are looking remarkably well. These Waikato lands are so eminently adapted to roots crops, that the farmer there should, by their use, derive the greatest benefit from the increasing value of the return from sheep.

The number of sheep exported during the past year has been: Frozen, 11,236; shipped to the South Sea Islands, 1,547.

Cattle.—There is no special development of any disease affecting cattle to report, and visits paid to the Auckland slaughterhouses bear this out.

Since the passing of the Cattle Act three head of cattle have been ordered to be destroyed for cancer, and have been so destroyed. Number exported to South Sea Islands, 335.

Horses.—Among horses the bot fly has been very prevalent and persistent in its attacks, and the area affected by this fly is increasing. Its effects are not visibly injurious to well-cared for animals in good order, but in badly-fed and low-conditioned horses it is certainly serious, and renders any improvement in their condition almost impossible.

There have been fifty-three horses exported to South Sea Islands.
Auckland, 6th April, 1891.

E. CLIFTON, Inspector.

NAPIER DISTRICT.

Sheep.—The sheep in this district are in a very satisfactory condition. The provisions of the Act dealing with lice have been enforced, and have proved of great benefit.

During the early part of last winter there was in some parts of the district a heavy loss among hoggets, caused by the heavy rains at that time, following on a dry autumn, and causing a rush of green feed without much substance in it. The lambing all over the district was exceedingly good, and the clip of wool satisfactory both as to condition and quantity.

The number of sheep exported, frozen, was 471,068 ; boiled down and used at preserving-works, 14,796. As, under "The Sheep Act, 1890," sheep going from one district to another do not require inspection, I have no means of giving accurately the number of sheep that have gone to other districts, but have given an approximate estimate of 220,000, which is rather under than over the number.

Napier, 7th July, 1891.

R. C. PASLEY, Inspector.

WELLINGTON—WEST COAST DISTRICT.

Horses generally continue in good health, subject to attacks of strangles. On one farm in the North Wairarapa Subdivision this disease, followed by blood-poisoning, as a result of re-absorption of pus, caused the deaths of fourteen horses. This was, I believe, due to their being in low condition, a want of provision for the isolation of the sick horses, and general want of proper treatment.

Cattle.—The health of cattle generally throughout the district is good. Cases of tuberculosis and cancer (so called) are met with occasionally, more especially, perhaps, on the West Coast.

Sheep.—This district still continues free from scab.

Worms.—Internal parasites generally were very prevalent during the winter of 1890. This seems mainly due to owners not recognising that it is imperatively necessary to have their sheep in a robust condition during the latter part of the autumn. This can only be done on good, clean feed with pure water, whilst a liberal allowance of salt and sulphate of iron seem to be of great service in rendering the system proof against the inroads of parasites. There requires also to be greater care exercised in the time and mode of drenching lambs for worms. This should be done early, and preferably with turpentine and milk. Many owners now wait until lambs are so reduced and weak as to be almost unable to reach the yards, and the rough handling they are there subjected to can only be attended with disastrous results. It appears to me likely that at some not far distant date it will be necessary to compel owners to take certain precautions against internal parasites, just as at present they are compelled to dip for the external ones.

Lice still continue to be prevalent during the latter part of the autumn and winter, and it has been necessary to insist on many owners dipping.

General Health.—The appearance of sheep throughout the district is good, except in bush country, where, owing to the moist season and consequent growth of grass, they do not look as well as might be wished.

Lambs.—The lambing was on the whole good ; I regret to say, however, that on the east side of the Wairarapa Lake there was this year a large mortality amongst the lambs, said by owners to be due to wool-balling. Veterinary Surgeon McClean visited the district with a view of ascertaining the cause, but, owing to limited time and bad weather, was unable to carry out a thorough investigation.

In the Taranaki-Hawera district there was a large mortality among the weaners. From Mr. McClean's report this appears to be due to anaemia, or poverty of blood, but as to how this is caused there does not appear to be sufficient evidence to show. In both these instances, if the mortality recur, further investigation is desirable.

Wool.—Owing to the favourable conditions of weather and feed, the clip has been a good one.

General.—The number of sheep introduced into this district from Hawke's Bay was 141,000, of these, some 30,000 went to the Wairarapa, the remainder being distributed over the West Coast. There were introduced at the Port of Wellington from Great Britain, five sheep and six dogs ; from India, one horse ; from Australia, ten horses, one buffalo, and twenty-three dogs. There were exported from same port 235 horses and one dog to India ; one dog to Great Britain ; to Australia, twelve horses, twenty-five dogs ; there were exported, frozen, 407,318 sheep and lambs, 21,375 head of cattle ; there were preserved, 22,704 sheep, 4,689 head of cattle ; there were boiled down about 30,000 sheep : making a total of 460,022 sheep, and 26,064 cattle treated during the year.

Wellington, 11th July, 1891.

JOHN DRUMMOND, Inspector.

MARLBOROUGH—NELSON DISTRICT.

Sheep.—All flocks remain free from scab. I have neither seen nor heard of any since September, 1889.

Lice.—A few sheep were found slightly infected, and the flocks dipped as soon as detected or shorn. Owing to continual wet weather last winter the wool clip was light, and the lambing poor on several of the runs. During the year there were 20,549 sheep boiled down or preserved.

Cattle.—No disease has shown itself in cattle or horses, but complaints were made from the West Coast of cattle being affected with cancer, and to such an extent that in one case the butchers gave an owner notice that they could not take cattle from him. On my inspecting the cattle I could not detect any disease, and have heard nothing since. As these reports are very injurious to cattle-breeders, I have recommended that a Deputy Inspector be appointed on the West Coast.

No stock has been imported or exported except coastwise, and that not in any number.

Blenheim, 30th May, 1891.

T. G. RICHARDSON, Inspector.

CANTERBURY—KAIKOURA DISTRICT

Cattle.—Several cases of diseased beasts have been found in the public saleyards ; these have been dealt with under "The Cattle Act, 1890." Otherwise cattle have been healthy.

Sheep.—The weather has on the whole been favourable for both sheep and wool.

The lambing was above the average excepting on a few of the far back runs.

All the Kaikoura flocks have been carefully examined, and that district may now be considered absolutely free from scab.

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 Carcasses 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.

APPENDIX C.
NUMBER of OWNERS on the 31st May, 1881 to 1890.

Owning—	1881.	1882.	1883.	1884.	1885.	1886.	1887.	1888.	1889.	1890.
Under 500 sheep ...	4,727	4,685	5,039	5,422	5,622	6,024	6,247	6,579	7,054	7,662
500 and under 1,000	704	844	970	1,033	1,146	1,189	1,139	1,182	1,381	1,528
1,000 " 2,000	500	552	609	672	718	747	723	794	826	854
2,000 " 5,000	350	416	467	473	505	532	531	524	597	586
5,000 " 10,000	236	225	244	256	270	263	289	287	277	283
10,000 " 20,000	201	209	200	211	213	228	221	213	239	236
20,000 and upwards ...	139	133	149	154	157	166	166	166	151	160
Totals ...	6,857	7,064	7,678	8,221	8,631	9,149	9,316	9,745	10,525	11,309

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