

Contagious Mammitis.—This still continues to be troublesome, particularly in dairying districts, and 253 specimens of milk from suspected cases were received at the laboratory for examination. This examination showed 30·4 per cent. to be affected with contagious mammitis, 36 per cent. with non-contagious mammitis, the remainder giving no evidence of mammitis.

Contagious Abortion.—This trouble has not been any more in evidence than formerly, and where the treatment recommended by the Department has been adhered to good results have almost invariably followed. In most cases where contagious abortion makes its appearance in a herd considerable loss occurs to the owner, and it behoves all dairymen, if this loss, which in addition to being an individual one is also national, is to be avoided, to carry out preventive measures. The treatment is simple and inexpensive, and the little trouble involved would be well repaid. It is to be regretted that the experimental work which was being carried out with a preventive vaccine was brought to an abrupt end through the herd (a private one) which was under the test being sold, and the animals scattered before the officer concerned was made aware of it. Up to that time the outlook for a successful result was promising, though it was realized that the procedure necessary for preparation of the vaccine and for its application was cumbersome and inconvenient when viewed from a practical working standpoint.

Tuberculosis.—It is somewhat satisfactory to note that the condemnations for this disease, as obtained from the results of the inspections of stock slaughtered at meat-export works, abattoirs, and bacon-factories, show that a slight reduction has taken place in the case of all classes of cattle and swine when compared with the previous year. A most encouraging feature as regards the cattle statistics is that the largest decrease is in the cows, which show a decreased percentage of 1·51, bullocks and heifers showing 0·98, and bulls 0·72 of a decrease; while swine show the very satisfactory reduction of 2·02, excluding those examined in butchers' shops, which are killed and dressed by farmers, the percentage of which, however, also shows a slight reduction on last year's figures. The number of cattle condemned by Stock Inspectors on the farms or in the yards as being affected with tuberculosis also shows a slight reduction on the previous year's figures. These are as follows: In 1918–19, 2,914 were condemned for tuberculosis; in 1917–18, 2,942 were condemned for the same disease.

Actinomycosis.—A number of cases of actinomycosis have come under the notice of officers, particularly in the South Island, where an unusually large percentage of the cases have occurred.

Cattle-tick.—During the past season considerable attention and consideration has been directed to this pest. Two very representative meetings of farmers, auctioneers, and others were held in Auckland, which were largely attended. The whole question was discussed at considerable length in all its aspects, and it was decided at the first meeting not to definitely fix a quarantine area until information could be gathered as to the extent in which the parasites had actually spread. During the six months following a large amount of available information was collected, and it was found that the original suggestion regarding a quarantine area would be likely to be impracticable. A further meeting was therefore called, at which, after careful consideration and discussion, it was recommended that the idea of quarantining a given district be abandoned. This was practically due to the extreme difficulty which would have existed in securing a workable scheme at any boundary which might have been fixed. The alternative was to place cattle-tick in much the same category as lice in sheep—that is to say, in any district or place where cattle-ticks were found that place would at once come under the operations of comprehensive regulations to be drawn up for this purpose. These regulations have now been drafted and submitted for approval and amendment, if necessary, pending which no compulsory action has been taken with regard to the eradication of the pest, but every endeavour has been made to secure this by the spread of information amongst the settlers in the affected districts, and by the erection of cattle-dips subsidized by the Government. One of these is in course of erection at Oakleigh. It was considered advisable to have this dip completed and in working-order before commencing to erect others, as it may be found that many improvements could be effected that did not show up until after the dip was in working-order. Mr. H. Munro, who was sent to Queensland to investigate the Queensland tick, has been stationed as Principal District Inspector in the Auckland Province. It may therefore be reasonably expected that the spread of this pest will be arrested, and that a decided reduction of its activity may be anticipated in the near future.

LIVE-STOCK STATISTICS.

Sheep.—The returns of sheep in the Dominion as at 30th April, 1918, showed an increase of 1,267,916 as compared with the previous year, the North Island accounting for 191,150 and the South Island for 1,076,760 of this increase. This could not, however, be regarded as a wholly genuine or lasting increase in the flocks, as it was to some extent at least accounted for through the very backward season experienced, particularly in the South Island, delaying the normal slaughterings up to that period and bringing them into the period immediately following, which, as anticipated, showed a considerable increase in the number slaughtered. The following table shows the number of sheep in the Dominion for the stated years:—

Year.	Stud and Flock Rams (Two-tooth and over).	Breeding-ewes.	Other Sheep.	Lambs.	Total.
1913	313,690	12,521,036	4,371,257	6,985,827	24,191,810
1914	321,869	12,920,176	4,377,936	7,178,782	24,798,763
1915	315,251	12,615,341	4,652,681	7,318,148	24,901,421
1916	316,131	12,892,767	4,682,298	6,896,954	24,788,150
1917	329,230	13,260,169	4,530,471	7,150,516	25,270,386
1918	325,111	13,022,034	5,295,269	7,895,888	26,538,302