

under the contract still remained in store in the Dominion. The shipping position, however, had by this time become very much easier, and large quantities of Imperial meat, together with a proportion of "free" meat, were released from the stores, and any anxiety regarding freightage was removed.

Soon after the termination of the contract the market prospects for our meat became somewhat clouded, so that the new season opened with a great amount of hesitancy on the part of the buyers, and although lambs continued to be bought for slaughter at somewhat reduced prices, sheep were very slow of sale even at "giving-away" prices. The demand for mutton for the Home markets, except of the lighter class, was practically nil, and the prices offered were barely sufficient to pay freight and other charges at this end, let alone any margin.

As will be seen from the following table, a very substantial increase took place in the number of lambs, and a considerable decrease in the number of sheep and cattle, slaughtered at meat-export works (principally for export) during the twelve months ended 31st March, compared with the previous twelve months' slaughterings :—

		31st March, 1921.	31st March, 1920.	Increase.	Decrease.
Cattle	.. ..	194,089	256,459	..	62,370
Sheep	.. ..	3,671,182	4,658,897	..	987,715
Lambs	.. ..	3,433,101	3,139,238	293,863	..

A new freezing-works which was in course of erection at Hicks Bay for the Gisborne Sheep-farmers' Freezing Company was completed during the year and commenced operations.

#### INSPECTION OF MEAT.

The inspection of all carcasses slaughtered at meat-export slaughterhouses, abattoirs, and bacon-factories was carried out satisfactorily during the year.

The following are the numbers of each class of stock slaughtered under direct inspection during the year ended 31st March, 1921 :—

Cattle	..	305,363	Sheep	..	4,332,378	Swine	..	130,487
Calves	..	28,421	Lambs	..	3,537,235			

With the exception of lambs and swine, which show an increase in the number slaughtered, a decrease on the previous year's figures is shown.

The following table indicates the destination of the dressed carcasses, those animals slaughtered at abattoirs being almost wholly for local consumption, and those slaughtered at meat-export slaughterhouses being intended (except in the case of swine) principally for export :—

		Abattoirs.	Meat-export Slaughterhouses.	Bacon-factories.
Cattle	.. ..	111,274	194,089	..
Calves	.. ..	21,896	6,525	..
Sheep	.. ..	666,196	3,671,182	..
Lambs	.. ..	104,134	3,433,101	..
Swine	.. ..	64,002	40,590	25,895

At ordinary slaughterhouses the stock killed was as follows : Cattle, 61,202 ; calves, 1,887 ; sheep, 278,142 ; lambs, 26,735 ; swine, 13,189.

In addition, 26,024 carcasses of pigs killed and dressed by farmers under the exemption clause of the Slaughtering and Inspection Act and sent in to butchers' shops and small bacon-factories were inspected by departmental officers. In regard to inspection of the carcasses of pigs sent in to butchers' shops, I desire to point out that of the number examined 541 were condemned as being affected with tuberculosis. When it is considered that these animals had, before condemnation, actually reached the butchers' shops in the various centres, it should not need any comment to emphasize the necessity, as already pointed out by me, for an alteration in the Act as regards the slaughtering of pigs by farmers under the exemption clauses. That an amendment is necessary was recognized by the then Chief Veterinarian shortly after the passing of the original Slaughtering and Inspection Act in 1900 ; it has been pointed out on various occasions since, and I trust that an amendment will not longer be delayed.

#### COMPENSATION PAID FOR STOCK CONDEMNED.

During the year under review compensation to the amount of £14,336 19s. 7d., on 4,322 cattle and one horse condemned and ordered to be destroyed under the provisions of the Stock Act, was paid out of the Consolidated Fund. Compensation paid for carcasses or parts of carcasses condemned on inspection at the time of slaughter, under the provisions of the Slaughtering and Inspection Act, amounted to £9,792 5s. 1d., making the total compensation paid under the Acts named during the year £24,129 4s. 8d., as compared with £27,048 for the previous year.

#### IMPORTATION AND EXPORTATION OF BREEDING-STOCK.

During the past year considerable numbers of valuable stud stock were imported by Dominion breeders, and their advent should be a valuable addition to the stock of the country. The following were the importations : Cattle, 66 (3 Shorthorn, 1 Hereford, 30 Aberdeen Angus, 14 Friesian, 17 Jersey, and 1 Red Poll) ; sheep, 452 (3 Romney Marsh, 7 Lincoln, 18 Border Leicester, 2 Southdown, 415 Merino, 1 Shropshire, 2 Corriedale, 1 Suffolk, 1 Ryeland, and 2 Wensleydale) ; swine, 35 (26 Berkshire, 6 Yorkshire, and 3 Poland China) ; horses, 112 (14 from United Kingdom and 98 from Australia) ; goats, 12 (including 6 kids). I am also pleased to record a considerable increase in the export trade in New-Zealand-bred stock for breeding purposes, particularly in dairy cattle and sheep, considerable