

retain their vitality outside the animal body, especially in the soil, or in the dirt which accumulates in the handle-socket of a dirty knife, for a long period. A ground-surface badly fouled by dung, or a knife fouled by use on dead sheep and not properly cleansed afterwards, is always dangerous from the point of view of blood-poisoning. The majority of sheep-yards are evidently not contaminated by malignant œdema, since no trouble caused by this disease occurs at shearing-time among sheep held in them; but whenever sheep die of blood-poisoning after shearing radical steps should be taken to prevent future trouble. One of two things must be done:—

(1.) The provision of new yards on clean ground. As this necessitates also the erection of a shearing-shed, it means the incurring of considerable expense. At the same time there are some shearing-sheds in the Dominion which could with advantage be abolished and replaced by better and more up-to-date buildings.

(2.) The removal of the whole of the surface soil of the yards to a depth of at least 6 in., and preferably 1 ft. Saturating the newly exposed surface with a solution of non-poisonous dip of a strength not less than 5 per cent., and after this has dried giving a heavy coating of lime. After applying the lime, the replacing of the removed soil by clean earth taken, in flat country, from well below the surface (but never from land inclined to be swampy), or from a cut into a hillside whenever possible.

Lambs should never be cut and tailed in sheep-yards, as, even if the organism of malignant œdema be absent, they are more susceptible to the effects of the contamination of newly inflicted wounds by dirt than are older sheep.

Where outbreaks of this disease have occurred at shearing-time it has been at times noted that contamination of the shearing-shed itself has been suspected by the owners as being responsible. Our usual experience, however, is that the source of the trouble lies in the yards; though some of the sheds, together with the ground-surface below their gratings, have certainly been in a very dirty condition—one which, on general principles of reasonable sanitation, should not exist.

The symptoms of blood-poisoning are very pronounced, and are not likely to be mistaken for anything else. They usually appear within from twenty-four to forty-eight hours after shearing or docking and tailing. The most characteristic feature is a well-marked swelling, which quickly becomes dark-coloured—in fact, almost black—and gangrenous. In the earlier stages the animal moves stiffly when forced to movement, gradually becomes more and