

USE OF THE BURDIZZO CRUSHER.

BEARING ON THE FROZEN-MEAT INDUSTRY.

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AN article warning against the improper use of an instrument known as the Burdizzo crusher or pincers, when used for the purpose of emasculating lambs, was published in the *Journal* for July, 1926. Since then the use of this instrument has increased among stockowners to a considerable extent. This no doubt is due to the fact that the method is seemingly more easily applied than any other, and also that the operation is bloodless. After noting carefully the effect of its application, however, a further word of caution is necessary with regard to its use.

When the instrument is being used care should be exercised to crush only one cord at a time, and to see that it is crushed; otherwise the operation is imperfectly performed. When used across the top of the scrotum or purse in order to catch both cords at once, there is a danger of cutting off the blood-supply to the parts underneath, in which case the whole purse may become gangrenous and slough off, thereby endangering the young animal's life.

When the instrument is used in the manner advised on calves and lambs that are well grown and with testicles fairly well developed, no exception can be taken to it. When used on very young lambs, however, it is doubtful if the operation will prove successful, and it is questionable if the designer ever intended the instrument to be used on such animals. In young lambs the testicles and cords are small and imperfectly developed; in many cases the cords are so slender that it is doubtful if the pincers close tight enough to get the proper grip to satisfactorily crush the cord. The result is an improper castration, and complete atrophy or wasting does not follow.

Even in those cases where the operation is performed satisfactorily it is doubtful if sufficient time is allowed to elapse between castration and the time of killing for the frozen-meat trade to allow the organ to waste sufficiently. Already there have been complaints from meat-works owing to the testicle not wasting after this method of castration. Further, in the case of two-toothed wethers castrated in this manner as lambs, the possible classification of them by the slaughtermen as "stags" is liable to be an endless source of trouble and dispute, while the lowered value of "stag" carcasses may ultimately be reflected in the price obtained by producers.

To sum up, while the Burdizzo crusher is capable of and will do satisfactory work when used on calves and lambs with well-developed testicles, I have no hesitation in stating that in the case of young lambs or calves the work performed is unsatisfactory, and breeders would be well advised to return to the old methods when castrating such animals.

New Zealand Wool Committee.—Mr. Herbert Hill has been appointed a member of this committee in place of Mr. L. B. Andreae, resigned.