

stock and examined them and found them free from infection. The certificates so far as the statements of the Inspectors went were utterly worthless. When complaint was made the answer was that they had not a sufficient staff to see the stock before they left their colony, and therefore they were obliged to give what certificate they could. He believed Mr. Ritchie got such certificates from Victoria as he (Mr. Bruce) had spoken of. The expense of maintaining a sufficient staff, when compared with the interests involved, was nothing. The expense to his colony was one-fourth of a farthing per head of sheep in the colony—a mere bagatelle when they looked at the value of the insurance. By putting on these restrictions and inviting the colonies to put on a sufficient staff of men they were leading them to protect themselves.

Mr. ROBERTS seconded the amendment.—Agreed to.

STRINGHALT.

Mr. BOAG said he would like to elicit some information about stringhalt, as likely to be of interest to horse-breeders. The disease was getting very prevalent, and it would be wise if they could get an expression of opinion about it, for the sake of those whose business it was to deal in horses.

Mr. PARK said the form of stringhalt known in these colonies was entirely different from that known in England, and he thought it better to remain silent until the disease was further investigated. In Victoria it had been attributed to the plant dandelion, and in New South Wales it was thought that parasites were the principal cause. Until a thorough scientific investigation into the matter had been made he thought it would be better to remain silent.

Mr. BRUCE called attention to the fact that there was a paper on this subject in the printed report of the last Stock Conference.

QUARANTINE OF NEW ZEALAND CATTLE IN TASMANIA.

Mr. RITCHIE asked permission to inquire from Mr. Tabart as to the length of quarantine imposed on New Zealand cattle introduced into the Colony of Tasmania.

Mr. TABART said the period of quarantine was fixed by Act of Parliament. It was reduced two years ago to thirty days, and it was only done on condition that New Zealand should fix the quarantine on Australian stock at ninety days. Previously it had been six months, in consequence of his having drawn the attention of his Government to the fact that he had seen a number of Australian animals which had been sent down to the Canterbury Show. These animals were admitted to the show-grounds, and were afterwards trained from Christchurch to Dunedin. Knowing how prevalent pleuro was in Australia, he had thought it was an unwise course for the New Zealand people to take, seeing that they were free from that disease here; and, when it was mooted to him that New Zealand was likely to introduce cattle into Tasmania, he intimated to his Government the positive facts, and suggested that the quarantine of six months should remain until New Zealand placed some period of quarantine on Australian stock. That was done, and he immediately recommended his Government to reduce the period to thirty days. That was two or three years ago.

Mr. RITCHIE said he thought the cattle from Australia, shown at Christchurch, were quarantined.

Mr. TABART was absolutely certain that they were not quarantined. He was at the Canterbury Show, and saw the animals exhibited there and at the show sale, and also saw the train take those unsold down to Dunedin.

Mr. BOAG recollected some cattle being at the show, and being sold, but did not remember whose they were. He also recollected another shipment entered for the show, but quarantined at Lyttelton, and not allowed to be shown. Gardiner's agent was very much annoyed, and put up flags over the empty pens. These were sold at Matson's, but they were in quarantine.

Mr. ROBERTS said the New Zealand ports were closed to foreign cattle in the same way as those on the other side; and Victorian cattle, and New South Wales cattle as well, were treated in the same way.

Mr. TABART said he was always prepared to adopt any mode of quarantine likely to be beneficial. He did not desire to be obstructive in any way. In meeting New Zealand on this point he would ask to be met in another matter—viz., the quarantine on sheep. It was a very grave matter to Tasmania. They were importing sheep from England, and the importers complained about the long period of quarantine imposed. He would take an opportunity of again asking the Conference to consider the question of quarantine on foreign sheep. There was no possible chance of introducing the scab disease, as the period of incubation was only sixteen to eighteen days, which exceeded the period of incubation for foot-and-mouth disease—of which the people of New Zealand were more afraid than anything else—and was completely covered by the voyage; the disease had, moreover, been stamped out in England. He hoped that they would come to an amicable arrangement by which New Zealand would be able to introduce cattle into Tasmania, and the reduction of the present term of quarantine on foreign sheep coming into the Australasian Colonies.

At Mr. ROBERTS's suggestion the matter was allowed to stand over. (See page 48.)

THE CROSS-BREEDING OF SHEEP.

Mr. ROBERTS then read a paper on "The Cross-breeding of Sheep," as follows:—

The development of the frozen-meat industry during the past few years has made the breeding from long-woolled sheep a greater necessity than it used to be in years prior to the initiation of the export of frozen mutton. Merinos are admittedly unsuitable sheep for export purposes, and, this being so, the question of what is the most desirable cross-bred sheep for purposes alike of wool and mutton is an all-important one to sheep-breeders in the colonies. Most sheep-growers in New Zealand have had somewhat lengthened experience in cross-breeding, and, as I personally have had a fair opportunity of judging of the respective merits of the different crosses, I desire to give a short *résumé* of my own experience, and the conclusions I have come to as to the most suitable cross for use. Our Australian friends who are with us are no doubt considerably interested in the question