

passed between the United States Government and His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington in regard to the terms on which Australian and New Zealand frozen meat will be admitted into the United States. It is understood that the inspection-tag employed by the Commonwealth of Australia for affixing to carcasses after they have been passed for export has been accepted by the United States Government as sufficient to comply with the sanitary regulations governing the admission of meat, but that in regard to New Zealand further information is being sought from the British Embassy as to the system of meat-inspection in force here before the Dominion's meat-inspection tag will be accepted. In case His Majesty's representatives at Washington have not already supplied the desired particulars, there is forwarded herewith, for transmission to the proper quarter, copies of the Acts and regulations in force here, and of a memorandum explanatory of our system of meat-inspection. Specimens of the tags employed for affixing to carcasses that have passed inspection are also attached. It is respectfully desired that these enclosures be forwarded to His Majesty's Government, and that the decision of the United States authorities be communicated to the New Zealand Government in due course.

W. F. MASSEY,
Prime Minister.

NOTES ON THE SYSTEM OF INSPECTION OF MEAT FOR EXPORT FROM NEW ZEALAND.

THE law relating to the slaughtering and inspection of meat intended for export is contained in the Slaughtering and Inspection Act, 1908, and the Slaughtering and Inspection Amendment Act, 1910, two copies of each of which, and of the regulations under the main Act, are attached. It will be seen that all meat for export must be slaughtered under Government inspection at a registered meat-export slaughterhouse, abattoir, or slaughterhouse at which a special Government Inspector is appointed. Almost the whole of the meat exported is slaughtered at meat-export slaughterhouses, the quantity exported from other places being very small. The meat slaughtered at the abattoirs is used almost solely for consumption within New Zealand. The arrangement for special Inspectors at certain slaughterhouses is designed to meet the case of smaller works where not sufficient slaughtering is done to keep an Inspector wholly occupied, and where, consequently, the fees imposed on meat-export slaughterhouses for inspection would press unduly heavily. The system is intended to afford relief in fees, and does not mean a different standard of inspection. Very little meat, however, from such works is exported.

Slaughterhouses.—Great attention is paid to sanitary conditions at meat-export slaughterhouses, &c. Before a license is issued the site and plan of the building are inspected and approved. As a rule, for all the larger buildings the advice of the Government's expert officers is sought and given. The provision of good drainage, and of a plentiful supply of pure water, and the maintenance of cleanliness are insisted upon, and it will be noted that the Act gives full powers to Inspectors in this direction. Practically the whole of the slaughtering premises are constructed on the open-chamber system, similar to that adopted in modern Continental abattoirs, thus enabling the Inspectors to have the whole of the slaughtering operations continuously under observation.

There are in this country thirty-one meat-export slaughterhouses and three slaughterhouses at which the system of special inspection is in operation. A list of meat-export slaughterhouses is attached, giving the names, locations, and also the capacity of each for storing and freezing carcasses.

Inspection of Meat.—As previously stated, all meat exported must be slaughtered under the supervision of Inspectors in the employ of the Government. The work is intrusted only to fully qualified veterinarians, every one of those inspecting at meat-export works being a member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, London. The system of inspection is very sound and very complete, and no effort is spared to ensure that all meat exported is in every way fit for human consumption. It involves *ante-* and *post-mortem* examination. There is a system of supervision of the Inspectors themselves, who are impressed with the need of the utmost vigilance in their inspection. The penalty for any dereliction in this respect is removal from the service; and this rule has been enforced in one or two cases that have occurred, even though only a small quantity of meat escaped the Inspector's notice, and that during a time of rush. This is indicative of the Government's intention to maintain the efficiency of its inspection service. After being passed a tag is affixed to each carcass of mutton and lamb and to each quarter of beef, certifying that the meat is free from disease. The tag is invalid without the Veterinary Inspector's signature thereon. Specimens are attached.

Quality and Health of Live-stock.—The average quality of the animals slaughtered for export, both cattle and sheep, is of a high standard, both pastoralists and meat-exporting companies realizing how important it is that the high reputation already obtained by New Zealand meat should not only be maintained, but, if possible, still further improved upon. The live-stock of New Zealand is remarkably free from serious disease, as compared with the condition existing in other countries.

Inspection of Live-stock.—In addition to the inspection of live-stock on slaughter, powers are conferred for the inspection of living animals on the farm. Copies of this Act—the Stock Act, 1908—are enclosed. It will be seen that this gives wide powers to Inspectors, and enables the Government not only to maintain a close supervision over the health of live-stock, but also to deal effectively with any outbreak of contagious disease that may arise. A large staff of Inspectors carries out the provisions of this Act.

Note regarding Operation of certain Sections of the Slaughtering and Inspection Act.—Sections 38–41 of the Slaughtering and Inspection Act, 1908, provide for the issue of meat-export certificates before meat can be exported from the Dominion. Certain provisions have to be complied with before the certificate can be issued, and amongst these it is necessary that the meat should be graded by Govern-