

*Cost of suppressing the Epidemic.*

The animals slaughtered on account of the foot-and-mouth disease epidemic of 1912 were 3,094 cattle, 6,395 sheep, 891 swine, and five goats; the net amount paid in compensation was £38,628.

*All Scotland and Three-quarters of England immune.*

The whole of Scotland and forty-six out of the sixty-two counties of England and Wales were kept entirely free from disease.

*The Board's Procedure in dealing with Foot-and-mouth Disease.*

The history of this epidemic appears to prove beyond question the effectiveness of the Board's policy in dealing with foot-and-mouth disease. That policy is based upon two principles—first, the immediate slaughter of all affected animals and “contacts,” and, secondly, the maintenance of severe restrictions upon the movement of animals within a radius of approximately fifteen miles of each infected place. But for its success this system depends upon the elaborate local organization for ensuring the prompt notification of disease and the enforcement of restrictions.

The Diseases of Animals Act, 1894, constitutes the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries the authority for executing and discharging the powers and duties conferred and imposed by the Act, and requires local authorities, as in the Act described, to execute and enforce the Act and every Order of the Board “so far as the same are to be executed or enforced by local authorities.”

The number of local authorities is 330, each of which has to appoint so many Inspectors and other officers as the local authority think necessary for the execution and enforcement of the Act, and to appoint at least one veterinary Inspector. Nearly all county local authorities and a number of borough local authorities have appointed the Chief of the Police as Chief Inspector under the Act, and all Superintendents, Inspectors, and Sergeants to be Inspectors. A number of constables are also appointed Inspectors by some local authorities, and those who have not appointed police as Inspectors have appointed other persons. There are about three thousand Inspectors and eleven hundred veterinary inspectors of local authorities. The Act also provides that the Police Force of each police area shall execute and enforce the Act and every Order of the Board. There are thus about twenty thousand persons, exclusive of the officers of the Board, who have statutory obligations in respect of the execution and enforcement of the Act and Orders made thereunder, of which some four thousand have special powers. Section 4 of the Act requires every person having in his possession or under his charge an animal affected with disease to give notice to a constable of police, who shall forthwith give information thereof to such persons or authority as the Board by order direct.

Every veterinary surgeon who, in his private practice, attends a case of disease is required by the Animals (Notification of Disease) Order of 1910 to notify the fact to an Inspector of the local authority and to a constable of the Police Force of the area in which the animal is. It is thus practically impossible for a case of foot-and-mouth disease to remain concealed. The Act of 1894 imposes on all local authorities special duties in respect of foot-and-mouth disease, and, under the powers conferred on them, the Board issued an Order dealing with that disease, so that there is in existence machinery for dealing with an outbreak without direct action by the Board. The Act also gives the Board permissive powers as to slaughter of diseased and suspected animals and of all animals that have been exposed to infection, and to pay compensation for the same; so since 1892 it has been the practice of the Board to deal directly with all outbreaks of this disease, and during recent years to cause all notices of suspected cases to be inquired into by their officers.

On receipt of a report of suspected disease, the Board at once direct one of their veterinary Inspectors to examine the suspected animal, and warning telegrams are sent to certain other Inspectors to hold themselves in readiness to proceed at once to the place at which disease is suspected to exist; and a warning telegram is also sent to the Chief of Police in the district as to the enforcement of the provisions of the Foot-and-mouth Disease Order. Arrangements are made for dealing with notifications out of office-hours. Pending the report of the veterinary Inspector, an order is prepared prohibiting the movement of all animals into or out of, or along, over, or across a highway or thoroughfare within an area of about fifteen miles radius round the infected place. The veterinary Inspector, as soon as he has come to an opinion, notifies the Board by telegram or telephone, and if his opinion is that foot-and-mouth exists, the Board, unless they consider that confirmation of it by the chief veterinary officer is desirable, at once notify the Inspectors already warned to proceed to the premises. As a rule the District Inspector is already at the place, having proceeded there on receipt of the warning telegram. The order prohibiting movement is at once issued and the local authorities, Chief Constables, and Superintendents of Police of districts, any portions of which are included in the area, are informed by telegram of the outbreak and the issue of the order. All railway companies having stations in the area are also informed. In the case of an initial outbreak—that is, one occurring after the country has been free from disease for some time—a warning telegram is sent to every local authority in Great Britain.

The Inspector in charge of the outbreak, immediately he arrives at the premises, ascertains that the rules applicable to an infected place are being carried out, inquires as to what animals, if any, have lately been moved from the premises or have been exposed to infection, and takes steps to have them placed under restrictions if this has not already been done. He advises what animals on the infected place and elsewhere should be slaughtered, and reports to the Board. While awaiting the Board's decision he makes arrangements for valuation, slaughter, and disposal of the carcasses. On receipt of instructions to slaughter, valuation and slaughter are proceeded with as rapidly as possible, every precaution being taken to prevent any possibility of disease being carried from the premises by the persons employed. As soon as slaughter is completed a thorough disinfection of the premises is