

land, 165. The use of the tuberculin test for diagnostic purposes was availed of to the number of 4,725 head of cattle. An analysis of the results of the examination of carcasses on slaughter at freezing works and abattoirs during the year discloses a decrease of 0·35 per cent. in the number of cattle found affected with tubercular disease. The number of cattle (excluding calves) examined was 364,572, of which 18,770, or 5·16 per cent. were found to be affected in varying degrees, a considerable number only very slightly. In the case of swine, a decrease of 0·50 per cent. is disclosed. The number of swine examined was 366,269, of which 31,420, or 8·57 per cent were found to be affected in varying degrees, and, as in the case of cattle, a considerable number only slightly. These figures indicate that an improvement on the past year has taken place, which it is trusted will be maintained and improved on in the years to come. While this disease is responsible for considerable monetary loss to producers in this Dominion, it is nevertheless satisfactory to note that it is held in check by our system of inspection and condemnation of all the live animals showing symptoms of the disease, and also the free use of the tuberculin test for diagnostic purposes. As has been previously mentioned, bovine tuberculosis is most prevalent in low-lying wet or swampy areas, of which there are many in the Auckland Province, and until drainage and better conditions generally can be introduced to those areas the incidence of tuberculosis may be expected to continue.

Actinomycosis.—The number of condemnations for this disease throughout the Dominion was 754, being a decrease of 97 on the previous year. The condemnations were distributed as follows: Otago-Southland, 53; Canterbury-West Coast, 64; Wellington, 252; Auckland, 385. All districts, with the exception of Auckland, which showed an increase of 5, shared in the decrease. Treatment for this disease when detected in the early stages is still the policy of the Department in lieu of slaughter, and as a result numerous cases have recovered.

Contagious Abortion and Sterility.—These troubles are still responsible for a considerable loss to dairymen, although in the case of contagious abortion most districts report a marked decrease of actual abortions as having occurred. This is probably the effect of acquired immunity, which is a particular feature of this disease. In the case of sterility, however, the trouble is still prevalent, and has been more or less general. It is a problem calling for close investigation in the field and the laboratory, and during the year a large amount of special investigational work has taken place. This is being continued, and it is hoped that with closer study of the various genital affections now existing among the cows some solution of the problem will result. A number of veterinary officers have been concentrating on this disease in association with the laboratory staff. Officers have also been giving lectures throughout the dairying districts with a view to assisting farmers to deal with these troubles to the best advantage with the knowledge already gained.

Parasitic Diseases (Sheep and Calves).—A number of cases of parasitic gastritis were reported, particularly in sheep. No doubt this trouble was accentuated owing to the very wet spring following on a wet winter, as its prevalence is largely influenced by climatic conditions. Liver-fluke has again been found to be affecting sheep in Hawke's Bay to some extent, and a special form of treatment is being given a trial in this district.

Malignant Growths.—During the year 342 cattle were condemned by Inspectors for malignant growths, and in all cases where it was possible to do so specimens were taken and sent to the Veterinary Laboratory, where examination confirmed the diagnosis.

Ophthalmia (Blindness in Sheep).—This trouble was noted in some districts, particularly in the West Coast district of the South Island and in the Nelson and Wanganui districts. Further investigational work is being carried out at the Laboratory in regard to this trouble.

Ante-partum Paralysis and Extrusion of the Vagina.—This trouble of breeding-ewes appeared in some districts, but only to a slight extent compared with some past years, this no doubt being due to the bare feed conditions generally prevailing at the dropping season.

Renal Congestion affecting Lambs.—This disease was reported as prevalent and causing some mortality in Central Otago, Oamaru, some parts of Southland, and Amberley, Christchurch, and South Canterbury districts. This trouble existed and was investigated twenty years ago, and was then pronounced to be a dietetic trouble, due to overrich and abundant diet. Subsequent observation has strengthened the opinion then formed. Arrangements will be made for the trouble to be further investigated during the coming spring, particularly in Central Otago, where the conditions are somewhat unusual.

LICE ON SHEEP.

Sheep affected with lice are still too numerous, and far too many prosecutions for exposing lice-infected sheep at sale-yards have had to be taken. It is the general opinion of the Inspectors in the various districts where this trouble is found that it is attributable not so much to a deficient dipping solution as to carelessness in both mixing and dipping. Inquiries from careful sheep-men confirm this, and indicate that where the directions of manufacturers of well-known dips on the market are followed no trouble is experienced. It is legally a punishable offence to expose sheep affected with lice for sale in a public saleyard, and as the presence of lice can be just as readily ascertained by the owner as by the Inspector who examines them at the yards, it is an unpardonable act of neglect on the owner's part not to take proper precautions to ensure that his sheep are free from lice before taking them to a sale. The Inspector has the power to order the withdrawal of the sheep from sale, and it is a question whether we should not adopt this practice generally with a view to seeing if any better results will ensue, in place of our present practice of allowing the sheep to be sold subject to immediate dipping, followed by a prosecution.