

watercourses in this area, and it has been suggested that these parasites may be responsible for acting as mechanical carriers of infection into the liver. This is the subject of careful investigation, as the liver-fluke is a widespread parasite (not so in New Zealand, fortunately), while mortality of the nature now under investigation is not commonly met with in fluke-infested areas in other countries.

Little was heard of trouble arising from extrusion of the vagina in pregnant ewes, the seasonal conditions as regards food conditions not being favourable to its development. Some cases of ante-partum paralysis in ewes occurred, but sheep-farmers generally are alive to the necessary preventive measures and no serious trouble occurred.

Generally, the year may be regarded as one in which our flocks were maintained in good health and good condition.

Other Farm-stock.

No serious trouble occurred among swine, and it is satisfactory to note that a further reduction in tubercular infection among these animals has taken place. No other form of contagious disease has called for investigation, and what trouble has occurred in the shape of sickness or mortality has been largely due to management conditions.

A somewhat serious epidemic of distemper has been responsible for a great deal of sickness and many deaths among dogs on farms and elsewhere, but it seems now to have largely subsided. Field officers have done their best to advise as to prevention and treatment.

WOOL-PRODUCTION.

The wool-clip showed an improvement upon that of the preceding year, and details regarding it are given in the divisional report. A great deal of attention has been given to the question of quality in wool, particularly the tendency to produce a hair-like fibre. A considerable amount of investigation and instructional work has been carried out with a view to assisting farmers to deal with this difficulty. Mr. A. H. Cockayne, Biologist, and Director of the Fields Division, has carried out a great deal of valuable work in this direction. In addition, Mr. W. Perry, of Masterton, whose skill and experience as a breeder are well known, has most generously co-operated and assisted in lectures and demonstrations at farm schools and at other meetings throughout the country. His valuable assistance is most highly appreciated.

The Wool Instructor of the Live-stock Division has himself carried out a great deal of work in the same direction, as will be gathered from the divisional report, one of the useful features being the examining of wool staples from rams, and reporting thereon to owners, thus enabling farmers to become aware of the good or bad qualities, as the case may be, of their rams from a wool-production standpoint. More care and more knowledge in selection and breeding are essential for overcoming wool-deterioration. The Board of Agriculture has taken a deep interest in this question, and the general effort now being made should do much good. It is necessary to strengthen our specialist staff for this particular work.

POULTRY.

The poultry industry is going ahead, and a good year has been experienced. The Department's functions in connection with the industry are largely of an instructional nature, and the Chief Instructor and his staff have done very good work.

The new poultry-station which has been established at Wallaceville should prove of value in assisting the progress of this industry, and it is proposed to carry out investigational and experimental work aimed at the various difficulties which poultry-farmers have to meet. The Live-stock Division report affords detailed information regarding the year's work of the poultry branch.

EXPORT OF STUD STOCK.

The Dominion is progressing in its export trade in breeding-stock, and with careful handling this should gradually develop into a valuable business. So far as sheep entered in our flock-books are concerned, the breed societies undertake inspection as to quality and type. A suggestion has been made that Departmental officers should also take part in this inspection, and that it should be extended to all live-stock exported.

The Department is desirous of doing all it can to assist in improving this growing trade, but it is open to question whether the actual inspection of purebred stock cannot be best carried out by the skilled persons appointed from the breed societies. The Department could, however, aid in other ways. As regards the point of setting a standard of quality for ordinary flock sheep exported,