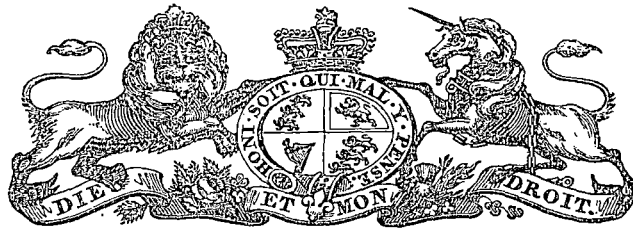


(No. 94.)



1892.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

“THE STOCK ACT, 1889:”

REPORT BY CHIEF INSPECTOR.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by His Excellency's Command.



“THE STOCK ACT, 1889.”

REPORT BY CHIEF INSPECTOR.

Office of Inspector of Stock, Hobart, 1st July, 1892.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to furnish my Report upon the working of the Stock Act to 30th June, 1892.

The Colony still continues free from scab disease, eleven years having elapsed since the disease was stamped out.

In my Report for 1891 I informed you that the restrictions that so hampered the stud sheep industry were likely to be removed by the neighbouring colonies. Practical effect has been given to the resolution passed at the Stock Conference of 1889, so that stud sheep now enter the ports of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, and New Zealand without dipping or quarantine before travelling inland.

I regret having to inform you that heavy losses have occurred amongst sheep in different localities from lung-worm. When a similar outbreak took place a few years ago in the Green Ponds District, I addressed letters to you bearing date 30th August, 10th and 30th November, 1886, proposing that a Bill be prepared to deal with diseased sheep, to prevent owners from marketing them to the injury of flockowners and the Colony generally, by spreading disease and causing a loss to unsuspecting purchasers. I also reported the result of an adjourned meeting held at Campbell Town on 22nd July, 1887, by the Board appointed to enquire into and pass resolutions, if desirable, to prevent the spread of disease in stock in Tasmania, at which the following resolution was proposed by the Hon. Jas. Gibson and seconded by the Hon. Alfred Pillinger, and carried unanimously:—“That the diseases under consideration, from information before us, seem to be in all parts of the world and appear year after year, we are of opinion that nothing can be done by legislation except that all animals dying from any cause whatever should at once be burnt up; and when lung disease—known as lung-worm—can be discovered, steps should be taken to prevent these sheep being removed without the authority of the Inspector.”

The present Stock Act gives no such power except in the case of scab. I consider now, as I did then, that this power should be secured to the Department by Act of Parliament.

I feel assured, from information acquired and veterinary investigation, that in this Colony on pastoral holdings disease is brought about by conditions and circumstances that should not exist. I would instance the faulty and indifferent drainage of low-lying country and lagoons, which cause unnatural and rank vegetation upon land that was formerly partially or wholly submerged, inducing stock to graze on pasture eminently adapted for the development and propagation of the germs of such diseases as lung-worm. There is also another cause, namely, indiscriminate ring-barking carried out upon land that is unfitted for such treatment, which results in conditions that are highly detrimental to the property, and ultimately develop springs and sodden areas which must eventually become plague spots.

Since the date of my last Report the following stock have been imported into the Colony, and undergone the necessary quarantine:—

Nubeena.

<i>Cattle.</i>					<i>Sheep.</i>				
Where from.	Bulls.	Cows.	Breed.	TOTAL.	Where from.	Rams.	Ewes.	Breed.	TOTAL.
New Zealand	5	5	Polled Angus	10	England	4	8	—	12
Ditto	1	...	Hereford	1					
Ditto	1	Ayrshire	1					
England	5	Devons	5					
Ditto	1	2	Polled Angus	3	4	8	...	12	
	7	13	...	20.					

Middle Island.—Cattle.

Where from.	Bulls.	Cows.	Breed.	TOTAL.
New South Wales	5	17	Devons	22
Victoria	—	3	Jersey	3
TOTAL	5	20	—	25

The shipments from England I consider will ultimately recoup the importers for their heavy outlay, who deserve the congratulations of breeders for their display of energy and enterprise in importing direct pure blood for the improvement of their own herds and flocks, and not trusting, as many do, to purchase stock that has been introduced for speculative purposes.

Importations have been received of Shropshire sheep from England. This breed is coming into great favour as butcher's sheep, carrying as they do the lean well intermixed with the fat better than any other mutton sheep. New South Wales breeders are alive to the benefit of crossing the Shropshire with the Merino, giving, as is evident, better quality of mutton for the export meat trade. Two consignments of Shropshire sheep have been made to that Colony during the past few months.

The great necessity for maintaining the stringent quarantine regulations now placed upon the importation of stock arriving from England, and also from the adjoining Colonies, is daily becoming more manifest. Not only is it necessary to prevent the introduction of infectious and contagious disease, but also to prevent pests from being introduced which would otherwise occur owing to the uncertain period of incubation being either hastened or retarded by unusual conditions, an instance of which has come under immediate observation. On 11th December last three Devon cows were admitted into the Nubeena Quarantine Station, and on 23rd January following they developed warbles, which are the result of having been struck by the gadfly prior to their being placed upon shipboard in England. Had they remained in England I am credibly informed that no sign of the existence of the pest would have appeared until the spring months in that country,—viz., March, April, and May; but consequently upon the cattle undergoing an English summer and autumn, and then being transported into our Tasmanian summer and autumn without the severity of a winter intervening, the development of the larvæ occurred at least two months earlier than would have resulted under natural conditions. This being the case, I deem it necessary to recommend that the Regulations now in force bearing upon the importation of stock from England be revised, with the view of giving the Stock Department and the Government Veterinary Surgeon the supervision of all importations for a period of six months after their release from quarantine, with power to take possession of the animals when this or any similar ailment makes its appearance; the cost and charges of the supervision to be paid by the owner. In asking this power it may be necessary to point out that it would be impossible to fix a period of quarantine to specially deal with such pests, differing entirely as they do from an infectious or contagious disease having recognised periods of incubation, which are completely covered by our present quarantine. The estimated loss from the attack of gadfly in England is from £2,000,000 to £7,000,000 annually.

When the Devon cows alluded to had completed their quarantine, I determined to retain possession of them, seeing that warbles continued to appear. This I deemed the safest and only course to adopt to prevent the introduction of the gadfly. I feel assured had I released them the owner would have kept them under strict surveillance, but I hesitated to establish a precedent by allowing stock to leave quarantine while suffering from what would, if introduced, probably be a serious trouble and heavy loss to stockowners.

The export of stud sheep still continues; and it is satisfactory to record that Queensland settlers are aware of the benefit accruing from a cross with Tasmanian sheep, and are purchasing large numbers, 525 flock rams and 205 flock ewes having been recently purchased in one line.

EXPORT Trade in Stud Sheep to the adjoining Colonies since 1870 up to 30th June of the present Year, with the Custom House Value thereon.

Year.	Number.	Value.	Year.	Number.	Value.	Year.	Number.	Value.
		£			£			£
1870.....	807	4115	1878.....	651	8485	1886.....	2207	32,689
1871.....	998	4660	1879.....	1496	47,259	1887.....	4005	54,337
1872.....	2433	15,500	1880.....	—	—	1888.....	4140	56,045
1873.....	2586	15,547	1881.....	1306	38,305	1889.....	4660	60,472
1874.....	1997	20,895	1882.....	1937	34,012	1890*.....	4748	65,110
1875.....	1673	23,414	1883.....	2913	62,275	1891.....	6581	74,892
1876.....	1403	18,157	1884.....	3244	60,758	1892.....	5398	37,774
1877.....	1303	10,103	1885.....	2825	51,325			

* Owing to delay in the sailing of the vessel, 2816 of these sheep, valued at £44,455, were not shipped until early in July.

The extermination of sheep ticks is a matter deserving of the greatest consideration and attention of sheepowners. The loss sustained from this parasite, I feel assured, would not be less than one penny (1*d.*) per lb. upon ticky wool. The Stock Act gives the Chief Inspector power to order any flock to be dipped, but it has not been exercised, being of a permissive character. To carry out this effectually the law must be clearly and stringently laid down, compelling all sheep to be immersed in a tick-destroying preparation between certain dates, and if not effectually performed in one dipping the same to be repeated. Much of the marketed wool would not then bear the discoloured appearance it now does from the presence of tick, but be bright and white.

In previous reports no mention has been made of the annual exhibitions held throughout the Colony of Merino sheep. I consider that the one held at Campbell Town on the 8th ultimo should be placed on record. From the opinions of practical men, after careful inspection, the fact was elicited that the show of 1892 has brought forward sheep possessing excellence of quality in all desirable points not only by old, but also by young breeders, and the interest evinced throughout has been unprecedented.

The opinion expressed by the gentlemen experts who acted in the capacity of judges (having travelled from New South Wales for that purpose) is that no finer exposition of Merino sheep were ever placed in a show-yard in the Australian Colonies.

Appendix B again clearly indicates the large amount of ready money weekly leaving Tasmania to provide our local meat supply. It appears that there is an increase of imported sheep and cattle introduced for butchering purposes over 1890 to the extent of 2477 sheep and 1966 cattle.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

THOMAS A. TABART, *Chief Inspector.*

The Hon. the Chief Secretary.

APPENDIX A.

RETURN showing the Number of Sheep, Cattle, and Horses depastured in each District in the Colony for the Year 1892.

<i>District.</i>	<i>Sheep.</i>	<i>Cattle.</i>	<i>Horses.</i>
Bothwell.....	125,971	4464	255
Brighton.....	21,550	1373	574
Campbell Town.....	141,024	4818	380
Clarence.....	14,974	791	357
Deloraine.....	25,759	6513	1035
Evandale.....	102,883	5063	722
Fingal.....	118,165	7954	659
George Town.....	25,161	1806	222
Glenorchy.....	920	183	62
Glamorgan.....	50,287	1687	296
Green Ponds.....	19,184	1010	190
Hamilton.....	120,812	9106	611
Hobart and Kingborough.....	5386	1101	238
Horton.....	10,880	8711	817
Huon.....	3017	1205	268
Longford.....	120,455	5459	1326
New Norfolk.....	19,028	1342	379
Oatlands.....	166,810	7237	844
Port Sorell.....	19,005	9000	1863
Richmond.....	44,738	1310	392
Ross.....	74,378	2080	93
Selby.....	64,824	4084	789
Spring Bay.....	52,119	1859	197
Sorell.....	34,619	2921	614
Westbury.....	48,408	4360	1194
Great Lake.....	65,940	2642	50
Ringarooma and Portland.....	25,336	8617	799
TOTAL.....	1,521,633	106,696	15,226

APPENDIX B.

RETURN of Stock slaughtered during the Year 1891.

<i>AT HOBART.</i>		<i>AT LAUNCESTON.</i>	
<i>Cattle—</i>		<i>Cattle—</i>	
Colonial.....	1947	Colonial.....	2739
Imported.....	4372	Imported.....	384
<i>Sheep—</i>		<i>Sheep—</i>	
Colonial.....	29,374	Colonial.....	16,900
Imported.....	36,872	Imported.....	15,300
<i>Calves.....</i>	777	<i>Calves.....</i>	230
<i>Pigs.....</i>	10,432	<i>Pigs.....</i>	604

APPENDIX C.

ABSTRACT of Wool Exports for the last Twenty-three Years, and Number of Sheep for the Twelve Months ending June 30.

	<i>Hobart.</i>		<i>Launceston.</i>		<i>TOTAL.</i>		<i>No. of Sheep.</i>
	<i>Lbs.</i>	<i>Value.</i>	<i>Lbs.</i>	<i>Value.</i>	<i>Lbs.</i>	<i>Value.</i>	
		£		£		£	
1869-70.....	2,583,876	134,855	2,609,718	163,709	5,193,594	298,564	1,531,186
1870-71.....	2,682,193	136,380	2,264,188	123,971	4,946,381	260,351	1,349,775
1871-72.....	2,678,171	183,500	2,230,819	170,246	4,908,990	353,746	1,305,489
1872-73.....	2,390,400	182,710	2,286,750	173,378	4,677,150	356,088	1,405,862
1873-74.....	2,873,207	207,205	2,657,584	181,728	5,530,791	388,933	1,531,242
1874-75.....	3,258,032	229,847	2,811,897	199,036	6,069,299	428,883	1,700,454
1875-76.....	3,761,993	242,498	2,845,321	195,300	6,607,214	437,798	1,783,072
1876-77.....	3,648,020	235,440	3,205,510	200,828	6,853,530	436,268	1,804,486
1877-78.....	4,020,152	260,543	3,436,453	218,799	7,436,453	479,342	1,845,810
1878-79.....	4,305,322	259,093	3,717,926	225,770	8,022,926	484,863	1,845,086
1879-80.....	4,283,926	229,226	3,862,734	224,416	8,146,660	453,642	1,800,639
1880-81.....	4,321,445	253,175	3,389,401	233,222	7,710,846	486,398	1,739,088
1881-82.....	4,620,892	239,819	3,582,717	311,656	8,203,609	451,475	1,759,420
1882-83.....	4,395,721	230,843	3,842,217	216,312	8,237,938	447,155	1,739,254
1883-84.....	3,924,145	197,708	3,846,553	233,436	7,770,698	431,144	1,704,333
1884-85.....	3,902,396	194,444	3,795,185	207,121	7,697,531	401,565	1,597,184
1885-86.....	3,798,057	126,882	4,264,666	169,127	8,062,723	296,009	1,566,881
1886-87.....	3,636,534	138,728	4,182,996	187,401	7,819,530	326,129	1,543,153
1887-88.....	3,470,092	125,896	4,597,314	208,964	8,067,406	334,860	1,474,310
1888-89.....	2,936,403	110,511	4,256,097	219,305	7,192,500	329,816	1,359,907
1889-90.....	3,516,898	147,690	4,791,298	236,220	8,308,196	383,910	1,448,814
1890-91.....	3,786,257	161,299	5,005,244	252,121	8,791,501	413,420	1,550,380
1891-92.....	3,247,049	145,032	4,837,149	188,625	8,084,198	333,657	1,521,633