

In this connection, I would venture to suggest, considering the great spread of the disease in this country, and the enormous amount at stake in Canada in connection with the cattle trade should disease by any chance be introduced there, whether it might not be advisable to entirely interdict cattle from going from Scotland to Canadian ports, until a better state of affairs exists here in regard to this question. I am the more fortified in this view from the position taken by the Government of Holland under very similar circumstances, and I think I can do no better to make this clear than by inserting a letter from Mr. John Thornton, the eminent auctioneer, on this subject, which was published in the North British Agriculturalist of 23rd October last, and which is to the following effect:—

“Whilst the Foreign Cattle Trade Association are soliciting the new Board of Agriculture to remove the restrictions on the importation of live animals, it may be well that the public should know the stringent regulations exercised by foreign countries against English stock.

“For many years I have sent bulls for breeding purposes to Holland and other countries. An old correspondent from Zierikzee recently wrote, urging me to send him a young bull, as his stock was retrograding for the want of fresh blood. I applied to Mr. May, Consul-General of the Netherlands, for permission. He informed me that his country, after years of labour and expense, had at last been freed from pleuro-pneumonia, and for two years and a-half no outbreak had occurred. In consequence of this, Dutch cattle were now allowed to land in London alive, and so long as pleuro-pneumonia existed in England no importation of English cattle would be permitted, not even from the healthy counties of Cumberland and Westmoreland, or with a lengthened quarantine.”

Stock from this country sent to Denmark for breeding purposes has to undergo six months quarantine, and long periods are still enforced against English cattle in America, Australia and New Zealand. Surely, therefore, what is good for abroad must be good for home. It is sincerely hoped that the new Board will at once take such firm steps that this country may be cleansed from a disease which has caused enormous losses, and which was imported to us from abroad.

Our herds and flocks are now in a more healthy state than they have been for a long time; there is a sap and wealth of hair and flesh about cattle this month that has not been apparent for years, and indicates their thriving, breeding condition. In numbers, however, both cattle and sheep are far below what they should be, according to the population and what the land of the country will carry. If, therefore, the Government will effectually clear the country of pleuro-pneumonia, allowing the free importation of dead meat from abroad, there is no reason why the meat supply, both of first and second quality, and at moderate prices, should not be equal to the demand.

I am very happy to see how satisfactorily the company formed in Aberdeen has been carrying on its operations in importing cattle from Canada. The numbers both of cattle and sheep are enormously in excess of last year, they being: cattle, 9,460; and sheep, 1681, and the demand for them has been quite up to expectation. In many cases, however, large losses have occurred, from shipping the cattle at too late a season of the year, numbers being swept overboard in consequence of the storms which are so prevalent in the late autumn and winter months.

As usual, I have received from the Clyde Trust, the Custom House, and otherwise, the following statistics respecting the general articles of import from British North America, and the tonnage of vessels for the past year:—

For the year ending 30th June, 1889:—

The tonnage of sailing vessels was .....	12,342
do steam do .....	109,373
Total.....	121,715