

On the Land

GENERAL.

A runholder in the Eketahuna district has just received advice from Home of the sale of his wool at 16½d.

Mr. George Charteris, of Mangatoto, has received his wool returns from London (says the *Feilding Star*). He received for hoggets and first ewes 1s 6d per lb, second fleeces 1s 5d per lb, pieces 1s 3d per lb, bellies 1s 2d per lb.

At the meeting of the representatives of local bodies to deal with the small-bird nuisance at Levin, Mr. T. W. Kirk, director of orchards, said that, placing everything on a low basis, no less than £1,400,000 damage was done per annum in the Dominion by small birds.

There is a dearth of labor for farm purposes just at present, and there is no reason why any man capable of doing manual labor should be out of employment (says the *Ashburton Guardian*). The war has taken away so many of our young men engaged as farm laborers that farmers are pleased to get men, however inexperienced.

The general yarding of all classes of stock at Addington last week was on the small side, and there was little radical change to record in the values obtained, except in fat sheep and lambs, which showed a distinct rise. Fat Lambs. Prime lambs, 17s to 21s 3d; others, 13s 3d to 16s 6d. Fat Sheep. Extra prime wethers, to 25s 6d; prime, 17s to 22s 6d; others, 14s to 16s 3d; extra prime ewes, to 25s; prime, 15s to 20s 9d; medium, 12s 4d to 15s; inferior, 10s 6d to 14s 9d. Fat Cattle. Extra steers, to £15; ordinary steers, £7 5s to £10 5s; extra heifers, to £15; ordinary heifers, £5 17s 6d to £10 10s; extra cows, to £13 2s 6d; ordinary cows, £5 10s to £8. Price of beef per 100lb, 23s to 37s 6d; extra prime, 40s. Pigs. Choppers, 5s to 11s; light baconers, 50s to 55s 6d; ordinary baconers, 60s to 68s; extra baconers, 72s to 76s. Average per lb, 5½d; porkers, 28s to 32s; heavy porkers, 34s to 40s. Average per lb, 6d; medium stores, 22s 6d to 28s 6d; small stores, 14s to 19s; weaners, 3s to 6s.

At Burnside last week there were average yardings of fat sheep and fat cattle, whilst fat lambs were in limited supply. There was a fair yarding of pigs which sold at about late rates. Fat Sheep. 2601 yarded, including several pens of good quality wethers, and well finished sheep were, if anything, a shade finer than previous week, but towards the close of the sale values were inclined to recede a little. Freezing buyers took a limited number of suitable ewes and wethers. Quotations: Prime wethers, 26s to 28s 6d; extra heavy, to 32s; medium to good wethers, 21s to 23s; light, 16s 6d to 19s; prime ewes, 20s to 22s 6d; extra heavy, to 26s 6d; medium, 15s to 17s. Fat Cattle. 103 yarded. The offering included several pens of well finished bullocks. The sale opened at about previous week's rates, but towards the finish prices were inclined to be a little easier. Quotations: Best bullocks, £14 to £15 10s; extra, to £17; medium to good, £11 10s to £13; others, £9 to £10 10s; best cows and heifers, to £11 5s; medium to good, £7 10s to £9; others, £6 to £7. Fat Lambs. 352 yarded, being a small yarding. Freezing buyers were operating, and prices for well-finished lambs were from 1s to 2s per head above those ruling at the previous sale. Quotations: Best lambs, to 21s 3d; good, 17s to 18s 6d; unfinished, 12s 6d to 14s.

PURITY OF SEEDS.

Seeds are perhaps more variable in quality than any other goods the farmer has to purchase. The purity of seeds varies according to the manner of growth, method of harvesting, and cleaning operations. The germinating-power varies with the climate and exposure to the weather during the period of growth, especially at the time of harvesting—as well as the mode of harvesting and storing (either in the rick or after threshing). Old or dead seeds (says the *Journal of the Board of Agriculture*) are sometimes mixed with fresh seed

of the same species in order to increase profits. Seed-testing or seed-analysis reveals the presence (or absence) of weed seeds which have an enormous capacity for damage when sown broadcast over the farm in impure seeds. It has been estimated that about 16½ million pounds sterling per annum is lost by farmers in Great Britain in growing (and getting rid of) weeds, a large proportion of which are sown with agricultural seeds.

A NEW CLOVER.

An interesting novelty in the plant-selection section of the Moutmahaki Experimental Farm is a stoloniferous red clover. This is the development of a plant discovered in the Auckland Domain by Mr. J. Beveridge, the Assistant Plant-breeding Officer at Moutmahaki. As far as can be ascertained this is the first instance which has been noted of a clover-plant extending itself by underground stolons—that is, similar to the manner in which *Poa pratensis* spreads itself—and therefore it may be regarded as an absolutely new type. At the present time the plant is being seeded in order to ascertain if it will transmit the new character from seed. Should this prove to be the case the type will be a valuable addition to the clover family. It would probably be of special value on lighter soils and in sandy country.

INTERESTING TRIAL OF OAT VARIETIES.

Last year (says the *Journal of Agriculture*) two varieties of oats were tested at Wauka Station, Pembroke, with excellent results—Record oat and New Abundance oat. The soil is naturally deep and good, and no manure has been applied to it for at least four years. The land has been cropped for years, and previous to being seeded with the oats a pea crop had been grown. Following this crop the land was fallowed.

On the 18th March of last year two acres were sown to the Record oat, the seedling being at the rate of two bushels to the acre, some crested dogstail being sown at the same time. The crop was cut in the middle of December, and was threshed on the 28th March of this year, the yield being 102 bushels to the acre. The grain was a splendid sample. The straw was rather too heavy, being well over 6ft high.

The New Abundance oat was sown at the same time, on the 18th March, the seedling being also at the rate of two bushels to the acre, but the seed in this case was sown with Western Wolds ryegrass and clover. It was also cut in the middle of December and threshed on the 28th March. The yield was 91½ bushels to the acre. The straw made splendid chaffing, being up to a length of 6ft. In both cases the grass and clovers were somewhat choked, but at the beginning of last month were coming away well.

CALIFORNIAN THISTLE.

It having been declared in Southland that cutting the Californian thistle is of no avail, it may be pointed out that in the North Otago district repeated experience has demonstrated that this method of eradication is entirely successful (says a writer in the *Journal of Agriculture*). Even on farms of rich volcanic land, where the thistle has been cut every year just at the flowering stage, and where it was exceptionally bad five years ago, to-day a marked improvement is noticeable. In some paddocks the vitality of the thistle is so weakened where it has not been altogether destroyed that a few hours' work is now sufficient to deal with it, whereas it formerly took several days with the mower and horses. Take the far-famed Totara Estate. Here the thistle had a very strong hold, and the land being rich it was most difficult to deal with. Now, by repeated cutting the thistle has disappeared altogether in many places, while where it still persists it is so weak that its control is now quite an insignificant matter. A large number of North Otago farmers will bear me out that cutting the thistle every year when in the flowering stage has done marvels in the way of destroying acres upon acres of the weed in their district.