

On the Land

GENERAL.

In the course of an interview at Eketahuna, Mr. J. G. Harkness stated (says the *Pahiatua Herald*) that the total output of cheese from New Zealand to the United Kingdom last season was 36,000 tons—a record for the country. He anticipated that with anything like fair climatic conditions there should be an advance of about 30 per cent. on this during the coming season.

A good whitewash for outdoor use (says an exchange) is made in the following way:—Put into a water-tight barrel $\frac{1}{4}$ bushel of lime. Slake by pouring boiling water over it, enough to cover five inches deep, stirring until thoroughly slaked. When it is slaked, add 1lb sulphate of zinc and 1lb common salt dissolved in water. The above wash may be made cream color by adding a little yellow ochre.

The Prime Minister stated last week that in the Lands Department difficulty was being experienced in getting the survey work in connection with land settlement schemes pushed on because so many surveyors had gone to the war. 'We have to be careful,' said Mr. Massey, 'while we are anxious that every officer who feels inclined to go to fight should get the opportunity, that the business of the country is carried on and interfered with as little as possible.'

It is interesting to note that up to the year 1820 a prejudice existed against the potato. According to evidence given before the Committee on Agriculture, the cultivation of the crop was injurious to the country. It was called the lazy root. Cobbett maintained that it engendered slovenly and beastly habits, first because it could be lifted straight out of the earth without requiring any implement besides hands; secondly, because it made people careless in cooking; thirdly, because, being innutritious, it took the place of more invigorating foods.

The role of phosphate of lime in the cultivation and improvement of grass lands is the most important. Without phosphoric acid the most valuable herbage—the clovers—will not flourish, and in consequence no nitrogen will be accumulated for the benefit of the succeeding crops. Therefore it is incontestable that phosphate may be supplied, and the question only remains in what form—superphosphate or basic slag. We (*Farm, Field, and Fireside*) think experience has shown that where the soil is humus or peaty in character or deficient in lime, the employment of basic slag is sufficiently indicated; in other cases, the use of superphosphate is to be recommended.

The Government Statistician returns the actual average wheat yield for the Dominion at 28.94 bushels per acre. If this is worked out on an estimate of 189,567 acres in crop, it gives a total yield of only 5,486,068 bushels, as against 6,169,760 shown by threshing returns up to the middle of May. Unless the complete threshing returns have shown a larger area in wheat than that estimated at, it is difficult to see how the average of 28.94 bushels per acre has been arrived at. More complete information is required to show the actual position. The estimated average of 39.77 bushels of oats per acre gives a total yield of well on to 10,250,000 bushels, which is 2,500,000 bushels short of the estimated requirement.

At Addington last week there were large entries of fat sheep and fat lambs, a fuller yarding of store sheep, and a rather smaller entry of fat cattle. There was a good attendance. Fat lambs were rather easier owing to a large proportion of unfinished sorts. Fat sheep were firm, and fat cattle were a little easier. Fat Lambs.—Prime lambs, 17s 6d to 22s 1d; medium, 14s to 17s; light and unfinished, 11s 6d to 13s 6d. Fat Sheep.—Extra prime wethers, to 30s 3d; prime wethers, 20s to 25s; others, 16s to 19s 6d; merino wethers, 12s 6d to 23s 4d; extra prime ewes, to 25s 9d; prime ewes, 17s 6d to 24s 6d; medium ewes, 14s 6d to 17s; inferior ewes, 8s 2d to 14s; merino ewes, 8s 3d to 9s 6d. Fat Cattle.

—Extra steers, to £15 5s; ordinary steers, £7 15s to £10; extra heifers, to £11; ordinary heifers, £5 to £8; extra cows, to £10 7s 6d; ordinary cows, £4 15s to £8. Price of beef per 100lb, 22s to 37s; extra, to 39s. Pigs.—Choppers, 45s to 135s; extra heavy baconers, 76s to 80s; heavy baconers, 60s to 72s; light baconers, 50s to 57s 6d—price per lb, 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d to 6d; heavy porkers, 40s to 45s; light porkers, 30s to 38s—price per lb, 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d to 6d; medium stores, 18s to 24s; smaller, 12s to 17s; weaners, 2s 6d to 5s.

At Burnside last week prices for fat cattle were firmer than at previous sale, whilst fat sheep of good quality maintained previous week's rates. Fat Cattle.—184 head yarded, the majority of which consisted of only medium quality. Prices for prime bullocks were much firmer than those of last week, while medium and inferior sorts sold at advanced rates. Cows and heifers also sold at an advance of 15s per head. Quotations: Best bullocks, £14 to £16; medium, £12 to £13; inferior, £9 10s to £10 10s; best cows and heifers, £11 to £12 10s; medium, £8 10s to £9 10s; inferior, £6 to £7. Fat Sheep.—2890 yarded, the majority of which consisted of ewes of medium and inferior quality. Prices at the commencement of the sale were not so good as those of last week, but as the sale progressed competition was more keen, and prices at the finish of the sale were equal to those ruling last week. Quotations: Best wethers, 28s to 30s 6d; prime, 22s to 23s; medium, 19s 6d to 21s; inferior, 16s to 17s; extra ewes, to 26s 6d; medium, 17s to 18s; inferior, 11s to 12s. Fat Lambs.—1200 yarded, a number of which were unfinished. The space allotted this week to the different freezing buyers was very limited, the result being that before many pens were sold the buyers had filled their requirements. Towards the end of the sale lambs were unsaleable at other than store prices. Quotations: Extra lambs, 21s 9d; good, 15s to 18s; medium, 12s to 14s. Pigs.—Prices for good baconers were firmer. Porkers were the same as previous week, while slips and stores were firmer. Quotations: Baconers, 70s; porkers, 45s to 50s; light baconers, 38s to 42s; stores, 19s to 22s; slips, 14s to 17s; suckers, 7s to 9s.

MILDEW IN WHEAT.

Investigations into the causes of the disease and the resulting poor crop have shown in many cases that the chief factor may be attributed to the too exclusive applications of quickly acting nitrogenous fertilisers, stimulating the growth of the leaf, but producing small and wrinkled grain.

Up to the present time no remedy has been discovered which has proved satisfactory in practice, but it is possible to mitigate the attack by selecting a variety of wheat not subject to the disease, and by the adoption of a judicious system of cultivation.

The late varieties should be avoided, as they are most liable to attack, as from the month of July the spores of the disease are most prevalent.

The kind of manures applied to the crop also seems to exercise a considerable influence. The application of nitrate of soda without mineral plant food renders the crop particularly susceptible, and the grower who, on a soil impoverished in phosphate and potash, attempts to force a big crop with nitrate of soda or sulphate of ammonia, must not be surprised if nature resents such unfair treatment, and inflicts punishment in the form of disease by weakening the stamina of the plant so that the plant is badly laid by harvest time.

It must be accepted as a rational principle that a nitrogenous manure should be supplemented by dressings of phosphate of lime, and usually potash if the best results are to be obtained.

An experiment was made to contrast the result produced by an exclusive dressing of nitrogen in the form of nitrate of soda against a complete manure. The complete manure plot yielded a good crop of heavy grain, while on the other plot the grain was so badly diseased and poor that it was only fit for feeding purposes.—*Farm, Field, and Fireside*.

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