

On the Land

GENERAL.

Run-holders in the Mackenzie Country state that they have never known such a winter before, and this can readily be understood by anyone who has been through it (writes a correspondent to the Timaru Post).

It is stated that owing to the persistent dry weather in Hawke's Bay the yield of wool this year will be about a pound and a-half less to the fleece, but that it will be of finer quality. Lambing in the district this year is said to be very satisfactory.

The past season has been the most favorable for agricultural and pastoral pursuits experienced in the Masterton and Wairarapa districts for many years past. Stock, generally, is in excellent condition. In many places the oat crops are well above the ground.

The outlook for the dairy industry in the Wairarapa is most encouraging. During the last two seasons butter-fat has ranged at fully 1s per pound. At this price, a selected cow should yield between £12 and £15 worth of butter-fat in a season. Allowing one cow to two acres, the owner of a 100-acre section could run fifty cows, which would produce £600 in the season, or £6 per acre.

Ravages of the sheep blowfly have been very severe amongst sheep in New South Wales this year. At a meeting of pastoralists to consider the matter it was stated that the Government had offered to conduct a series of investigations into the life history and habits of the bush blowflies, provided the pastoralists would contribute £600 a year towards the cost. The view was expressed at the meeting that the time had arrived when it was essential to do something in this direction, the object being to try and get at the pest at its place of origin.

At the Addington life stock market there were fairly large entries of stock and a good attendance of buyers. Fat cattle sold at about previous week's rates. Store sheep were in good demand, and ewes were rather firmer in the fat sheep market, as the butchers had run out of supplies. Fat pigs showed no change. Fat sheep.—Extra prime wethers made to 37s, prime 23s to 30s, lighter 19s 3d to 22s 6d, prime ewes 20s to 28s, others 15s 4d to 19s 6d, hoggets 16s 2d to 21s, merino wethers 22s to 24s 3d, merino ewes 14s 1d to 16s 8d. Fat cattle.—Steers made £7 5s to £11 10s; extra, to £22 10s; heifers, £7 to £10 2s 6d; cows, £6 to £11 2s 6d. Pigs.—Choppers made £4 to £5 17s 6d; heavy baconers, 62s 6d to 75s; lighter sorts, 52s 6d to 60s, or equal to 6d per lb. Heavy porkers made 47s to 50s; smaller pigs, 38s to 45s, equivalent to 6d per lb. Large stores made 38s to 41s; medium, 28s to 37s; and small sorts, 20s to 27s. Weaners brought 14s for small pigs to 21s 6d for extra good sorts.

At Burnside last week there were only medium yardings of cattle and sheep, but there was a good entry of fat pigs. There was a yarding of 1967 fat sheep. There was a good demand throughout the sale, and prices, as compared with those ruling at previous sale, were up about 1s per head. A few pens of really prime heavy weights were yarded, but the bulk of the entry consisted of fair to good quality wethers, with a few pens of ewes. Extra heavy weight wethers brought 29s to 31s 3d, prime 26s to 28s, medium 24s to 25s, light 20s to 22s 6d, best ewes 25s to 30s, medium 21s to 27s. Fat Cattle.—Only 140 were penned, and as these were barely sufficient for the requirements of the trade there was a very brisk sale, at prices which were, if anything, higher than those ruling the previous week. Extra heavy bullocks sold at £16 10s to £17 10s; prime, £14 to £15 10s; medium, £11 10s to £13; light, £9 10s to £10 10s; best cows and heifers, £11 10s to £13 5s; medium, £9 to £10 5s; light, £6 to £8. There was a full yarding of fat pigs, but all good baconers sold under fair competition at prices about on a level with those of previous week. Porkers were not

so strongly supported. Stores and small sorts were also more plentiful. Well-bred lots met a brisk demand up to late rates.

THE VALUE OF TREES.

The beneficial influence of trees with respect to soil and water is at last being made evident to those who are concerned in the growth and preservation of trees and in the fertility of soils. Professor J. Bowman, in his book on the *Principles of Soils in Relation to Forestry*, deplores the reckless timber-cutting which has taken place in America during the last 25 years. The effects of deforestation are, he says, that the rain beats directly upon the soil, the retarding influence of the ground litter and tree roots is withdrawn, and more rapid soil removal occurs. When once these evil effects have been allowed to take place, mankind is deprived of the favorable conditions that preceded the epoch of destruction. In a hundred years man may achieve such baneful results as nature will compensate only during a geologic period of hundreds of thousands of years. Soil is a resource of priceless value. The earth as we find it to-day must be treated with care if the human race is to have a fair distribution of its wealth in time. There is something shocking in the thought that a single lumber merchant may in 50 years deprive the human race of soil that required 10,000 years to form. Dr. Schlich has stated that the extensive peat bogs of Ireland came into existence only after the original forests had been destroyed, and it is probable that the large areas of moorland and waste in Great Britain have been the result of removal of trees and failure to plant others to replace them. Apart altogether from the value of the timber when felled, there is the very important fact that land without trees is in a state of deterioration.

EFFECTS OF FEEDING STUFFS ON QUALITY OF MILK.

The result of numerous experiments to test what influence, if any, different kinds of feeding stuffs exercise on the quality of the milk yield seem to confirm the view that the percentage of butter fat in milk is not affected by the food given to the cows, so long as they have a sufficiency of nourishing fodder, and that the real factor in the fat production is the individuality of the animal.

All attempts to increase the butter-fat in milk by a fodder rich in fat have led to negative results. As much as 2lb of fat in various kinds of food has been fed per day per 2000lb live weight, and in nearly every case the milk fat contents have been rather depressed than increased. It may, however, be mentioned that aromatic substances seem to exercise a favorable influence. Although the kind of food has no effect on the yield of butter fat, it certainly has an influence on the character of the fat, and in this way the quality of the butter is dependent on the consistency of the fat, and is consequently dependent on the food supplied to the cows.

An expert gives the following short summary of the foods which influence favorably or otherwise the quality of the butter. A very good effect is produced by meadow grass, green fodder of clover, or good meadows and carrots. Hard butter is produced by old pasture grass, sour hay—that is, hay made from sour grass—straw, leaves of roots, potatoes, peas, vetches, beans, cottonseed cakes, and palm-nut cakes. Soft butter is produced by oats, maize, bran, rice meal, rape cakes, and sunflower cakes; much straw, root leaves, sour fodder, potatoes, and pulp from beet sugar factories are said to produce milk with a bitter flavor.

PILES.

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