

MISCELLANEOUS.

Ground in which it is intended to sow tares for seed should now be well prepared. In Marlborough this crop is best sown during September. The practice of sowing 2 bushels of tares with $\frac{1}{2}$ bushel of oats, then feeding this off after it has made sufficient growth, has proved satisfactory. The tares smother the oats, and are easily harvested by use of the hay-rake. At the same time the oats during the growing-period serve the valuable purpose of keeping the tares more erect. September is also a good month in Marlborough for sowing peas for seed purposes.

Lucerne and cow-grass paddocks which are being set aside for seed-crop purposes should be thoroughly cultivated. If plants are too close together judicious grubbing-out will often be worth while—on smaller areas, at least. In order to yield good seed plants must have plenty of air and sunlight.

A peculiar position has arisen around Blenheim this year owing to the floods which took place in May. Until this month the ground has had little opportunity to dry. In many cases 6 in. or 8 in. of silt remains on the land. In the event of dry weather setting in this soil will cake, and working, if deferred too long, will become very difficult. A good plan is to run over the land with the cultivators to loosen and aerate the top soil, and follow by a surface-sowing of grass in the case of pasture. This has already been done on some of the flood areas. Similar advice may apply to some of the other localities which were flooded.

Fields that are intended for hay or ensilage should be shut up about the end of September. They should be thoroughly cleaned up and well harrowed to ensure a clean bottom for the mowing-machine. If not already top-dressed this may still be done, using superphosphate at the rate of 2 cwt. per acre, and where the land is light and poor 1 cwt. of blood-and-bone may be added.

—*Fields Division.*

CASTRATION AND DOCKING OF LAMBS.

One of the most important factors connected with these operations is to have the work carried out on clean ground, and under no consideration should the lambs be marked on the same ground two years in succession. The reason for this precaution is that the ground is soiled with blood, and consequently becomes a propagating-ground for bacteria, especially those which cause blood-poisoning or septicæmia. The organisms of tetanus, or lockjaw, must also be similarly guarded against.

The most suitable place is a clean grass-paddock, high-lying and well exposed to the sun. Low-lying and damp places should be avoided as far as possible. Bacteria must have moisture to keep them alive and multiplying, so that if the ground where the operation is carried out is wet or damp it may become a veritable incubator. On the other hand, ground in a high and dry position, well exposed to the sun, soon becomes clean, the sun's rays being the best disinfectant. On damp ground the moisture protects the disease organisms from the direct action of the sun.

Lambs should be castrated and docked when from three weeks to a month old. Marking lambs during the heat of the day or while heavy warm winds are blowing should be avoided as far as possible. The cool of the afternoon is the best time to carry out the work. For marking operations a few hurdles and coils of wire netting, together with a sufficient number of stakes, should be held in readiness. With these a pen and yard can be erected in a suitable part of the paddock where the ewes and lambs are to be folded.

The instruments required consist of two clean, sharp knives, together with a bucket of water to which has been added some disinfectant. The hands of the person operating should be well scrubbed in a solution of the disinfectant before commencing operations. The knife when not in use should be placed in the bucket containing the antiseptic solution.

The method of operating most often employed is as follows: The lamb is held by an assistant in such a position as to expose the pouch. The operator grasps the pouch at the tip and with one clean cut severs the end. The testicles are then pressed out and drawn. This is generally done with the teeth, but some operators prefer drawing the testicles with the fingers. If the cord should happen to be broken by rough handling before the testicle is properly drawn bleeding will be the result, and the blood collects in the pouch. This must be removed