

MISCELLANEOUS.

Stacks of late-harvested cereals should now be securely thatched and made snug for winter if not intended for early threshing or chaffing. It is also wise to plough a few furrows round the hay or sheaf stacks as a precaution against fire spreading to them by a carelessly dropped match.

New season's chaff, if it has not been properly matured by a few weeks in the stack, is very prone to heat, and if it has to be bagged should be left as loose as possible. The effect of immature chaff will usually be noticed in the team by swellings on the legs, especially if it is fed suddenly. The better plan is to mix it with old chaff and gradually accustom the animals to it, until the material in the stack is properly sweated and matured.

The outlets of all drains should now have attention, so that water may get away rapidly during the winter months. Plans for winter and spring drainage should also be put in hand; the work may be then done when opportunity offers.

—*Fields Division.*

MATING THE EWE FLOCK.

When all the rams are turned into the same paddock with the ewes it is often noticed that they spend a great deal of their time and energy in fighting each other for possession of the first ewes to come in season. The effect of this fighting is reflected later on during the period of mating. The following plan will be found decidedly advantageous on the smaller sheep-farms, though it cannot be adopted in every case, particularly on large stations: First separate the ewes into small lots of about fifty to sixty in each paddock, put a ram in with each lot, and leave them for a fortnight. Then mix every two lots, leaving them together for ten days. Next mix them all, and let them run together until the rams are taken out at the end of the season. The idea is that each ram is first of all put with a separate lot of ewes; therefore he is undisturbed and can pay strict attention to business for a full fortnight. By the time the mixing of every two lots takes place each ram has steadied down a good deal, and fighting will not take place nearly so readily as would have been the case had all been put in together in the first place. When the mixing takes place each ram will pick up the ewes that the other one has missed, and after the mixing of the whole lot there is every chance of each ewe having been served before the rams are finally taken out.

Another method is to hold a small number of rams in reserve until half-way through the mating-period, and then turn them in with the others. Being quite fresh, they will sort out the ewes not yet served. Either method leads to an increased lambing, but the first-mentioned plan is recommended where practicable. It has been tried and has always given good results.

—*J. G. Cook, Live-stock Division.*