

On the Land

GENERAL.

The Ashburton County Council (the *Timaru Post* states) has decided to extend and improve its water-race system at an estimated cost of £11,043. At present there are 1800 miles of water races in the county. The new scheme provides for the construction of an additional 425 miles of races.

The recent spell of warm weather has assisted the tomato crop (the *Cromwell Argus* states), and increased supplies have brought a substantial reduction in price. In conversation with a grower who has half an acre in tomato plants, one of the staff of the paper was informed that he had marketed 15cwt in four days.

At the Sunnyside Mental Hospital farm (says the *Press*) a test of silver beet is being undertaken in co-operation with the Fields Division of the Department of Agriculture, for the purpose of ascertaining the suitability of the beet as a forage for milch cows. The crop is being eaten off, and it is understood that the results are eminently satisfactory, and that a good second crop is now coming away.

Some very good crops of peas have been grown at the Waihao Downs (says the *Press*). Mr. Michelson is looked upon as the leading grower, and has had crops of 62 bushels and under. Mr. McLeay, of the Douglas Settlement, has been credited with one of 64 bushels. Growers are putting young store pigs into their crops, and feeding them off for fattening. This has intended to inflate the price of young pigs.

The shipment of cattle some time ago, from Auckland to Java, has, according to accounts received recently, not succeeded too well. Although only one died on the trip over, still, since arrival, another six have been lost through some so far unknown cause. Veterinary experts have not yet decided whether this is the result of the change of feed, or the very hot climate, but lean rather to the latter idea.

There were average entries of fat sheep and lambs at Burnside last week. There was a good yarding of fat cattle, but the supply of pigs was limited. Fat Cattle.—The yarding consisted of 200 head. The bulk of the yarding consisted of cows and heifers of moderate quality. A few pens of good quality bullocks were also penned. The demand throughout the sale was dull, and prices for fair quality beef were lower by fully 12s 6d per head compared with late rates. The demand for good ox beef was good, and prices for this quality were slightly lower than previous week's rates. Good bullocks sold at £12 10s to £13 10s; medium, £10 to £11; light, £8 10s to £9. Good cows and heifers, £8 10s to £9 5s; medium, £6 15s to £7 10s. Fat Sheep.—3067 were penned. The yarding was made up largely of ewes, the bulk of which were of good quality, the most of the entry of wethers were of moderate quality. Competition for good quality sheep was good, and they were firm at late rates. Moderate quality sheep may be quoted at 6d per head below previous week's prices. Prime wethers, 22s 6d to 24s; extra, to 27s 3d; good, 21s to 22s; light, 18s 6d to 19s 6d; prime ewes (heavy), 20s 6d to 22s; good, 18s to 19s; medium, 14s 6d to 15s 6d. Fat lambs, 980 were yarded. The quality was rather better than what has been coming forward. Freezing buyers were operating freely, and the sale throughout was an excellent one, at prices 6d per head in advance of recent rates. Best lambs, 19s to 20s; good, 17s to 18s; medium, 15s to 16s; forward conditioned lambs, 13s to 14s. The pigs forward were disposed of at prices on a par with late rates.

At Addington last week there was a very large entry of store sheep, but the yardings of fat sheep and lambs were somewhat smaller. Fat cattle were easier, but there was a decided rise in the prices of fat lambs. Store sheep of all classes sold well, and fat sheep were very firm. Heavy fat pigs were slightly easier, but porkers were unchanged. The sale of store sheep opened very briskly, competition being keen for ewes at prices

on a par with those ruling a week earlier. For wethers there was no change in values, and the same may be said of lambs. Two-tooth ewes made 18s to 25s 9d, four-toothed, 18s 6d to 23s 9d; six and eight-tooth, 14s to 19s 1d. The quality generally of fat lambs was fairly good, and there were several lines of very prime lambs offered. The prices showed a marked improvement as compared with late sales. The range of prices was:—Tegs, 19s 6d to 21s 9d; extra, to 23s 8d; average weights, 17s to 19s; light and unfinished, 15s 4d to 16s 6d. The yarding of fat sheep showed a falling-off in numbers. The quality was about up to the usual average. Several lines of Chatham Island wethers topped the market. The range of prices was:—Prime wethers, 21s to 24s 7d; others, 17s to 20s 6d; prime ewes, 18s to 22s 11d; medium ewes, 15s 6d to 17s 6d. The yarding of fat cattle was an average one. All classes of beef showed a decline equal to 1s per 100lb, the current price being 27s to 30s. Steers made £7 17s 6d to £11; extra, to £13 15s; heifers, £5 17s 6d to £8 10s. Pigs.—Quotations were: Choppers, £3 to £5; heavy baconers, 62s 6d to 73s; lighter baconers, 50s to 60s; prices per lb, 6½d. Best stores, 36s to 40s; medium, 28s to 35s; small, 22s to 27s; weaners, 15s to 18s; sow in pig to £4 15s.

DOMINANT CONSTITUENTS OF THE POTATO CROP.

By 'dominant' is understood the particular kind of plant food, either nitrogen, phosphate, or potash, that plays the chief role in the healthy growth and development of a plant.

Thus it is well known that nitrogen is most essential for cereals, phosphate for turnips, and similarly potash appears to be the great requisite for potatoes. This does not mean that the other constituents are not also necessary—they are necessary, because without their co-operation the plant could not thrive; their presence enables the plant to make the best use of the potash.

Analysis of the tuber shows the relative proportion of its plant food requirements. A crop of ten tons of potatoes extracts from the soil 128lb of potash, 78lb of nitrogen, and 72lb of phosphate per acre. As Mr. Hall says: 'Potash is essential, as the potato is a starch-making plant.'

Another point to be noticed is that the potash to be properly utilised by the plant during its growth must be in a form readily soluble, hence the potash in commercial fertilisers yields better results than the potash in farmyard manure.

These are facts which have been established by numerous experiments at agricultural stations, and have been proved by field practice on a large scale.

Not only is potash necessary to enable the plant to produce a large crop, it has also the very valuable property of helping the plant to resist disease, a property which is particularly valuable with the crop in question. Professor Desprez, well known as a practical agricultural scientist in France, found, after a careful investigation of potato disease in the important potato growing districts in the north of France, that one of the causes contributing to the development of the malady was the lack of available potash in the soil.

AFTER TWENTY-ONE YEARS.

One would be inclined to believe that it would be impossible to cure a disease that had clutched its victim for twenty-one years. But RHEUMO conquers chronic Rheumatism. Mr. E. M. Rudman, of Collingwood street, Nelson, writes:—

'It gives me much pleasure to be able to say that by using your wonderful medicine RHEUMO I have been completely cured of Gout and Rheumatism, from which I have been a sufferer for the past twenty-one years. I may say I have not had the slightest symptoms for the past two years, and feel convinced it is a permanent cure.'

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