

On the Land

GENERAL.

The rainfall for the present year to date according to figures supplied by the Christchurch Observatory, totals 12.018in, as compared with 15.261in for the corresponding period last year.

From an acre of ground on a farm at Alford Forest road, Ashburton, about two tons and a-half of lucerne have just been cut (says the *Guardian*). Part of the crop was sown on inoculated soil and part on ground given no artificial aid, and the growth on the ground inoculated was much more luxuriant than on the part not inoculated. Last year four crops were cut from this particular patch, and it is hoped this year to take five crops from it.

All roots, when boiled, are useful as pig food, but in a raw state must be given sparingly, as pigs can assimilate only small quantities of raw vegetable matter, much in the same way as we ourselves are capable of doing. Starchy and sugary foods, such as parsnips and beetroot, should, when boiled, have plenty of meal of a flesh-forming character, like barley or pea-meal, mixed with them to balance the ration. Especially is this the case when porkers are being rounded off, when as much as 6lb of concentrated meals may be fed per head per day, the food being of the consistency of thick cream.

The story of the English farmer who harvested a wheat crop and refused to thresh it until it reached a certain price has often been told, and is confirmed in the *Field* of August 21. A Mr. Philip Selby, of Aisby, Lincolnshire, harvested his wheat 34 years ago, and declared he would not sell it till it reached a certain price. He did last year without revealing what this price was. His son has had the stack threshed, and the grain was found to be in excellent condition. The wheat averaged 24 bushels to the acre, weighed 60½lb to the bushel, and sold for 7s 6d per bushel. The purchaser has had some of the wheat made into bread, and it turned out an excellent article. The field contained nine acres, and the stack was thatched about six times.

The attendance at the Addington stock market last week was small. General satisfaction was expressed at the good rain that had fallen during the night, and this undoubtedly had its effect on some classes of stock, but not anything like the effect expected, especially in the store sheep section, which showed little improvement over previous week. Fat lambs, 15s 9d to 24s 6d. Fat Cattle.—Extra prime stores, to £24 10s; ordinary steers, £7 17s 6d to £13 10s; extra prime heifers, to £10 5s; ordinary heifers, £7 15s to £12 10s; extra prime cows, £18 10s; ordinary cows, £7 to £11—price of beef per 100lb, 36s to 54s, and extra to 60s. Fat Sheep.—Prime woolly wethers, 31s to 41s 6d; others, 19s 6d to 30s; shorn wethers, 20s to 30s 9d; woolly merino wethers, 20s 3d; prime woolly ewes, 29s to 45s 6d; others, 16s 11d to 28s; shorn ewes, 20s to 40s; woolly hoggets, 21s 3d; shorn hoggets, 18s 9d. Pigs.—Choppers, 70s to 150s; extra good baconers, to 100s; heavy baconers, 80s to 92s; light baconers, 60s to 75s—price per lb, 6½d to 7d; heavy porkers, 44s to 50s; light porkers, 38s to 42s—price per lb, 7d to 7½d; best stores, 36s to 40s; medium, 23s to 34s; small, 14s to 21s; weaners, 10s to 17s 6d; sows in pig, to 60s.

There was a large yarding of fat cattle at Burnside last week, 250 being penned. The extreme rates paid the previous week doubtless induced many graziers and farmers to bring forward consignments in the hope of securing high prices similar to those recently paid by butchers. Although the number yarded was much above the average offering at Burnside, a splendid sale resulted, and prices realised throughout were anything but disappointing to owners. As a matter of fact £27 was paid, which is probably a record for the yards, and at the end of the sale prices were firmer than at the commencement. Prime bullocks sold at £20 10s to £23 10s; extra, to £27; medium, £16 to £18 10s; light, £13 to £14 5s; best cows and heifers, £14 10s to £16;

extra, to £17 10s; medium, £11 12s 6d to £12 7s 6d. Fat Sheep.—2112 were forward, this number being principally made up of prime quality sheep. The sale opened at prices on a par with those of the previous week, but, owing to the fact that a number of butchers had fulfilled their requirements during the week in the country, and also that the yarding consisted principally of heavy and prime quality, prices receded as the sale progressed, so that at the close a drop of fully 2s 6d per head on opening values had to be faced. Prime wethers sold at 46s to 51s 3d; extra, to 55s 6d; medium, 33s 6d to 36s 9d; light, 26s to 29s; best ewes, 32s 9d to 36s 3d; extra, to 39s 9d; medium, 26s 9d to 27s 9d. Lambs.—37 were yarded, and sold under brisk competition at late values. Best, 25s 3d to 26s 6d; medium, 18s 9d to 22s 6d. Pigs.—There was a fair entry of fat pigs, and a full yarding of stores and weaners. Porkers and baconers met fair competition at prices a shade below previous week's values. Good stores and slips met a fairly good sale, but suckers were not in strong demand.

CLEARING THE FREEZING STORES.

As showing the rapid clearance of the freezing stores, it is estimated that after the steamers at present loading have been dispatched the quantity of meat available for shipment by November 15 will only equal 205,000 freight carcasses. The steamers *Karamea*, *Rangatira*, *Kaikoura*, and *Star of Scotland* will be available to load this. The payments for meat purchased by the Imperial Government since the meat supplies were requisitioned totalled over £5,500,000, or an average of over £70,000 per month. These figures indicate the manner in which the freezing works of the Dominion have been relieved by the ample shipping facilities now available. No less than 11 new freezing works are either contemplated or in course of erection, providing storage for 900,000 freight carcasses, and in addition the enlargements of the present chamber space provide for a further 900,000. Altogether in the Dominion there will soon be storage accommodation for 4,000,000 freight carcasses.

THE ANNUAL SHEEP RETURNS.

The complete sheep returns for 1915 show the sheep in the Dominion on the 30th April last as 24,824,394, which is the greatest number yet recorded. The North Island returned 13,309,982 (increase 154,024), and the South Island 11,514,412 (decrease 128,393), leaving a net increase for the Dominion of 25,631 as compared with the previous year. The flock sheep number 24,079,573, divided into crossbreds and other longwools 22,849,385, and merinos 1,230,188. Stud sheep and flock rams number 744,821, the different breeds in this total being represented as follows: Lincoln, 96,997; Romney, 328,410; Border Leicester, 81,912; English Leicester, 65,801; Shropshire, 16,025; Southdown, 54,297; Merino, 51,476; other breeds, 49,903. Compared with 1914 breeding ewes show a net decrease of 341,311 (North Island increase 21,189, South Island decrease 362,500). The number of sheep-owners is returned as 22,680, an increase of 478, in which all the sheep districts share except Otago, which shows a decrease.

Te Kuiti

(From our own correspondent.)

October 22.

The mission in this parish terminates next Sunday evening. The church is filled every morning and night to hear the instructions and the splendid sermons of the Rev. Father Taylor. The missionary and Father Finn, parish priest, are exceedingly gratified at the hearty response of the people. A number of the young ladies gathered together during the week at the request of Father Taylor, and formed a very strong branch of the sodality of the Children of Mary.

A kitchen tea was held at Mr. F. Connell's residence last week by the ladies. An enjoyable evening was spent, and a large number of very useful articles were presented for the new presbytery.

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