

ON THE LAND

MARKET REPORTS.

At Burnside last week 148 fat cattle were yarded. The sale opened with prices above the previous week, and values were well maintained until the close. One extra prime heavy bullock realised £43 15s, heavy bullocks £30 to £36, medium £22 10s to £27 10s, others £20 upwards, best cows and heifers to £25 12s 6d, heavy to £20, others £12 upwards. Fat sheep: 882 penned; a very small yarding. The quality, speaking generally, was indifferent, there being only a few pens of prime heavy-weight sheep forward. The sale opened with prices considerably higher than the previous week, but as it progressed values were inclined to recede. Extra prime heavy wethers 77s to 86s, heavy wethers 60s to 70s, medium 50s to 57s 6d, extra prime ewes to 81s 6d, heavy 55s to 62s 6d, others 40s upwards, shorn wethers to 45s, shorn ewes to 38s 6d. Lambs: 64 penned. The yarding was quite equal to buyers' requirements, and the demand compared, with the previous week, was easier. Best lambs sold to 31s, others 20s upwards. Pigs: A small yarding. The demand was very keen, and all were sold at prices on a par with the previous week's rates. Best baconers made from 10½d to 11½d per lb, and best porkers from 10½d to 11½d per lb.

There was a double market at Addington last week, as no sale will be held in Carnival Week. The yarding of all classes of stock was a good deal above the average, but in spite of this the demand was very keen, and in all the fat stock sections high prices reigned supreme as usual. There was an improvement in the size of the store sheep yarding, but the quality was inferior to that at the previous week's sale. The demand was fairly brisk, and late rates were fully maintained. Two-tooth ewes and lambs, all counted, 21s 4d to 22s, sound-mouthed ewes and lambs, all counted, 18s to 24s 9d, four and six-tooth wethers 33s to 44s 9d, six and eight-tooth wethers 36s 6d to 39s 6d, ewe hoggets 25s 6d to 40s, shorn hoggets 21s 9d, mixed-sex hoggets 27s 6d, wether hoggets 22s 6d to 33s 4d. Six hundred and three fat lambs were penned, as against 152 at the previous sale. The quality was fair, and values went to 39s for fats. There were 12 races of fat sheep—the biggest yarding for a long time. Prices were firm all through for good stock. Extra prime wethers to 87s 6d, prime 60s to 70s, medium 48s to 56s, lighter 30s to 45s 3d; extra prime ewes 70s 6d, prime 52s to 61s, medium 42s to 50s, lighter 30s 3d to 40s, prime hoggets 90s, lighter 33s 10d. The yarding of 358 head of fat cattle was not nearly enough for the requirements of the whole fortnight, and in consequence the demand was very keen, and bidding brisk for all reasonably good stock. Extra prime steers to £42 5s, prime £21 10s to £36 10s, ordinary £11 5s to £19, extra prime heifers to £37 5s, prime £17 to £25 10s; ordinary £9 to £16, extra prime cows to £38, prime £15 to £20, ordinary £9 10s to £14 10s. A large number of vealers were penned. Runners to £10, good vealers £4 to £5 5s, fair vealers 45s to 52s 6d, small and inferior 6s to 42s. There was a large entry of pigs and a fair demand. Extra heavy baconers £8 12s 6d, heavy baconers £6 to £7, medium £5 to £5 17s 6d—equal to 10d per lb; heavy porkers, 85s to 90s, medium 65s to 75s—equal to 10½d to 11d per lb; choppers to £12.

Messrs. Donald Reid and Co., report as follows on the fortnightly sale of rabbitskins, etc., held on last Monday: Fair catalogues were offered to the usual attendance of buyers. At the commencement of the sale prices showed a considerable drop on last week's rates, but towards the end values showed a slight improvement. Runners and suckers 14d, racks 40d, autumns 100d, incomings 110d, second bucks 136d, second does 190d, prime bucks 150d, prime does 222d, outgoing 130d, second black 120d, first winter black 190d, outgoing black 64d, milky 44d, springs 60d, fawn 101d, hareskins 40d, horschair 21d, catskins up to 1s.

SHELTER.

The great importance of shelter is not appreciated as it should be (says the *N.Z. Farmer*). Only a few of our more progressive farmers make provision for it. And a good example was set by quite a number of our pioneer settlers, but the lesson has not been learnt as it should have been. The present generation fail to study the question in a serious manner. They superficially view it as a means of providing comfort to stock, whereas if they carefully reasoned it out, they would come to see that adequate shelter-clumps of trees at the intersection of fences—being more economical than live fences—is a sound, profit-making proposition. As Professor W. A. Osborne, of the Melbourne University, pointed out in a lecture he delivered last year, animals turned out in sheltered country require far less food to keep them healthy and strong than

when turned out in exposed country. Shelter also assists materially the well-being of plants, be they in pasture or crop, and this is particularly noticeable in the spring months of the year. Unfortunately in these days traffic in land values has deterred many from permanent settlement, thus destroying all incentive to improve farming property by a process which means long delay in benefit accruing, the fact being overlooked that planting naturally adds to the value of any property. It is really a tangible improvement, even though it is only the man who possesses the land when the trees have well grown who actually benefits. The State has not been prodigal in its efforts to advance afforestation or to encourage the planting of shelter, even though the destruction of natural shelter has been drastic and often quite unnecessary. But it is to be commended for its action in permitting farmers desirous of providing shelter to obtain trees for planting at a very low rate. The offer has not been availed of to the extent it should be. But it is to be hoped the Government Department concerned will not tire of this lack of appreciation, but will realise that as farmers become more generally acquainted with the opportunity offered, they will respond. Individual farmers have done fine pioneering work, and in this connection Mr. Henry Reynolds, of Cambridge, should be specially mentioned. He has not been content with preaching the virtues of Eucalyptus McArthurii as a farm tree, but has distributed, free of cost, far and near, seed of this valuable species of the eucalypti family.

LUCERNE AS A SOIL-IMPROVER.

It must be taken into consideration that, apart from crop-returns, the land on which lucerne is grown is not depreciating in quality, but greatly increasing in productivity (writes Mr. A. Macpherson, Fields Instructor, Christchurch, in the *Journal of Agriculture*). This is due to the power of the lucerne-plant as a collector of nitrogenous matter from the air, and of drawing to the top soil, from strata at great depths underneath, valuable mineral elements that shallow-rooted plants could never reach, leaving these elements of fertility to be utilised by future crops of whatever kind. Further, the mechanical effect of the extensive root-system of the lucerne-plant can hardly be overestimated. The decaying of the roots adds humus to the soil, and the openings left by them in the under-strata form a wonderful system of channels for the penetration of air and water into the soil. The continual dropping of lucerne-leaves from the cuttings also makes heavy annual contributions to the humus and nitrogen of the soil. Thus when the lucerne-field is ready to be used for a different crop it will be found that the soil is wonderfully changed not only in its chemical elements, but also in its physical character. In countries where this aspect of lucerne-culture has been investigated it is estimated that, after a field has been in lucerne for five or six years, the fertilising value of the stubble and some 6in deep of roots ploughed under is about £4 per acre, while the value of the stubble and entire root-system is not less than £7 per acre.

STEERING MANGOLD-SEED.

By steering mangold-seed in water ten hours before sowing it will germinate quicker and show up in the drills before weeds appear in quantity (writes J. Beverley, in the *Journal of Agriculture*). It is necessary to put a stone in the bag to ensure the seed sinking below the surface of the water. After about ten hours' immersion hang the bag up to drain, when the seed will be ready for sowing. If this method is adopted the scarifier can be run through the crop at an earlier date, thus reducing the cost of cleaning. In case more than one variety of mangold-seed is used, it is recommended that separate vessels of water be used for steering seed, so as to avoid the risk of spreading disease, if present, from one variety to the other.

ST. BEDE'S COLLEGE

NORTH ROAD, PAPANUI, CHRISTCHURCH.

(Under the patronage of his Lordship Dr. Brodie, Bishop of Christchurch. Conducted by the Marist Fathers.)

The new College will be open for the reception of Boarders in February, 1920.

Prospectus and particulars may be obtained on application to the Rector.

(Present Address: Ferry Road, Christchurch.)

Scully's Shoes

Will give you Greatest Satisfaction in COMFORT,
LONG SERVICE, AND SMART APPEARANCE.
Scully Bros., : Tay Street : Invercargill.