

On the Land

GENERAL.

'Lucerne is the richest hay food known,' is the way W. J. Spillman, of the United States Department of Agriculture, expresses it.

There are 264 cow-testing associations in Germany, all established since 1907. The cows that are dealt with number 341,900, or 32 per cent. of all the milk-yielding cattle.

As a rule, it is not a very satisfactory practice to attempt to fill in the thin places in a lucerne field. The young plants will not have a very good opportunity to start. Taking it all in all, when a paddock becomes too thin to be profitable, it pays to plough it up and reseed it.

Clover is excellent pasture for pigs, and lucerne, though not used so much, is equally good. It is estimated that clover, lucerne, rape, or a rape-clover-and-oat mixture, properly grown and fed, will effect a saving of nearly 30 per cent. in the grain ration for growing pigs.

A Captain Murray, of Maynooth, is resuscitating an old polled breed of Irish cattle known as Maoile cattle (the word 'Maoile' means polled or bald). The captain has been collecting all the animals of this kind he can find before they become altogether extinct. This native breed is known from the old literature of Ireland to have been in existence for at least 1000 years. The animals are of fairly large size, polled, and color tending to a black roan. They yielded up to six gallons of milk daily, and were extremely hardy.

The composition of farmyard manure varies greatly with the feeding of animals that produce it and the nature of the litter. A ton of rich manure, rotted to an average extent, contains about 11lb of nitrogen, 6lb of phosphoric acid, 14lb of potash. Calculating the cost of this quantity of fertilising constituents in ordinary commercial fertilisers, we find that it could be bought at less than 10s in a condition much more available as plant food, but on the other hand farmyard manure has advantages which commercial fertilisers do not possess. It supplies to the soil a bulk of organic matter, developing humus, and acts with great benefit on the physical condition of the soil. Stiff land is loosened by its action and light soils rendered more retentive.

An English contemporary has unearthed an old record, according to which it was enacted in that country in 1535 that 'butchers should sell their beefe and mutton by weighte, beefe for a halfe-penny the pound and mutton for three farthings, which being devised for the great commoditie of the Realme (as it was thought) has proved farre otherwise, for at that time fat oxen were sold for six and twenty shillings and eight pence the piece, fat wethers for three shillings and four pence the piece, fat calves of the like price, and fat lambe for twelve pence. The butchers of London sold penny pieces of beefe for the relief of the poor, every piece two pound an a halfe, some time three pound for a penny. . . . What price it hath grown to since it needeth not to be set down.'

There were only average yardings in all departments at Burnside last week. The fat cattle yarded totalled 218, consisting for the most part of good quality bullocks, with a few pens of good heifers. On account of the large yarding prices were from 10s to 15s easier. Best bullocks brought from £12 to £14; extra do, £17 12s 6d; medium to good, £10 to £11; light and inferior, £8 to £9 10s; best heifers, £10 to £11 10s; extra, £14; medium to good, £8 to £9; light and inferior, £6 to £7 10s. There was a medium yarding, of fat sheep, 2441 being penned, comprising for the most part good quality wethers, with a few pens of medium to good ewes. The sale opened with prices 1s in advance of the previous week's rates, but these declined as the sale advanced. Prime wethers brought from 26s to 28s, extra to 32s 6d, medium 22s

to 24s, others 19s 6d to 21s, prime ewes 22s to 25s, extra 27s 6d, others 18s to 20s. There was a small yarding of fat lambs, 280 being penned. Exporters were not inclined to operate, and the bulk of the entry went to the graziers at prices on a par with previous week's rates. Prime lambs brought from 17s to 18s 6d; extra, 19s; medium, 15s to 16s 6d; unfinished, to 13s 6d. There was a small entry of pigs which were sold under keen competition.

At Addington last week there were large entries of fat stock. Fat cattle sold well up to the previous week's rates. God store ewes and hoggets were dearer, and other descriptions were firm at late rates. New season's lambs sold well, and fat sheep sold at advanced rates and up to record prices for special lots. Pigs showed an improvement. There were 30 new season's lambs penned, some of them being well grown. They made 18s to 25s for the larger sorts, and 11s 6d to 17s for smaller. There was a large entry of fat sheep, totalling over 6000, and included in the entry were some exceptionally prime lots of wethers, several pens being prize-winners at various shows during the past season. A new Australasian record was established, £14 10s being recorded, as against £8 last year, for Mr. F. Bull's wethers. The range of prices for the special lines of wethers was £2 10s to £14 10s. Extra prime wethers made to 38s; prime, 22s 6d to 29s 9d; others, 18s 9d to 22s; merino wethers, 14s 4d to 22s; extra prime ewes, to 42s. Steers realised £8 to £12; extra, to £27 10s; heifers, £8 12s 6d to £9 5s; extra, to £14 10s; and cows, £6 10s to £10 15s. Choppers made £3 10s to £6 17s 6d; heavy baconers, 70s to 77s; and lighter, 55s to 65s—these prices being equivalent to 6d per lb.

BY-PRODUCTS IN SLAUGHTERING CATTLE.

Increasing attention is being given in Ireland to the home slaughter of cattle as a safeguard against outbreaks of cattle disease of which the country had such a bitter experience last year. As is well known, the vast majority of the cattle exported from Ireland leave the country alive, and take with them their hides, horns, bones, hoofs, tallow, and other parts which represent the raw material of numerous import-ant industries.

At the recent spring show of the Royal Dublin Society, an interesting exhibit was shown under the auspices of the Department of Agriculture of by-products of the cow. The object of this exhibit was to illustrate the advantages that accrue to a country in which a dead meat industry was conducted. One of the items exhibited exemplified the use to which the by-products can be put, and the value represented in what many people consider is merely rubbish.

When skins have been what is termed 'limed' in a tannery, they are removed from the lime-pits and the hairs are taken off them. Until recently these hairs, and the grease which come off with them were thrown aside until a large heap was accumulated, when it was sold for a trifle to farmers, who ploughed it into their land as manure. A German chemist, attracted by these facts, set to work to see if a better use could be found for this ingredient. As a result of his experiments, he succeeded in converting it into a high-class gelatine, which is now being in turn converted into the highest grade cinematograph films. Thus, what heretofore ranked as rubbish has become, by means of scientific treatment, a valuable economic asset.

PILES.

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