

On the Land

GENERAL.

New Zealand seed merchants, it is stated, have purchased virtually the whole of the European output of silver-beet seed. This sudden demand has come as a great surprise to European growers, who have hitherto restricted their trade to the production of seed for market-garden purposes.

That the dairying season in South Taranaki has started under unusual circumstances is proved by the exports. During the last few weeks about £18,000 worth of cheese has been forwarded overseas from the Patea grading stores, and in a few days another shipment of 70,000 crates will be sent, thus making about £46,000 since the opening of the season. This is in addition to 1780 boxes of butter already sent, and about 800 boxes to be forwarded by the Ruapehu next week.

The mortality among calves this winter has been heavier than usual (says the *Akaroa Mail*), and in some cases 50 per cent. of large herds have been lost during the winter months. The calves were put out to winter as usual in cocksfoot paddocks apparently strong in constitution, and the winter being a very mild one it is difficult to guess at the cause of the mortality. The weather, though not very rough this winter, was, however, much colder than usual, and this may account for the loss.

'There is every prospect of a good produce year,' said an Auckland bank manager to a *New Zealand Herald* reporter, in commenting on the large volume of exports from the Auckland province last month. 'The output will be large and prices remunerative. This is bound to have an effect on the money market unless the effect is swamped by heavy imports. The prospects are for money becoming more plentiful, but I do not know whether it will become any cheaper, as there is a plentiful demand for it.'

Reports from all parts of the South Canterbury district on the season's prospects are encouraging. One well-known farmer told a *Timaru Post* reporter that the appearance of the country at this time of the year had never been better. Farmers from Fairlie, Ashburton, and the south line were wearing perpetual smiles despite the fact that the lambing season necessitated toil from early morn till dark. Crops, particularly south of Timaru, were looking perfection itself. They were strong and healthy, and showed no signs of the ravages of the grub.

To say that the land is flowing with milk is only half stating the case (says the Stratford correspondent of the *Taranaki Herald*). A cloud-burst is more truly expressive of the situation. Cheese-factory managers are wondering where the milk is to find vat-room next month. The remarkably favorable spring is, of course, the main factor in the abounding productiveness of the herds, but there is reason to believe that at last results are coming from the preaching of the gospel of better cows and better feeding. Testing associations, breeders' associations, the object-lessons of the shows and of paddocks enriched by basic slag are having effect. If the exchanging of farms were out of fashion Taranaki would be another Denmark.

At Addington last week there were moderate entries of stock, except in the fat cattle and fat lamb sections, which formed the larger yardings. There was a fair attendance of buyers. Beef was easier, and there was also a considerable drop in the price of fat lambs. Very little business was done in store sheep on account of the high reserves. Fat sheep were firmer. Bacon pigs sold at previous week's high rates, and porkers were still dearer. Fat Lambs: Best sorts made 17s 6d to 20s 6d, lighter 13s 6d to 16s 6d. Fat Sheep: Extra prime woolly wethers made up to 34s 6d; prime, 26s to 30s 6d; others, 19s to 25s 6d; shorn wethers, 17s 4d to 23s; prime woolly ewes, 19s 10d to 27s 7d; shorn ewes, 15s to 16s 7d; woolly hoggets, 21s 8d to 30s 9d. Fat Cattle: Steers made £7 12s 6d to £12 10s; extra, to £21; heifers, £5 10s to £9; extra, to £13 12s 6d;

cows, £5 15s to £8 10s; extra, to £13 10s. Fat Pigs: Choppers made £4 to £6 12s 6d; heavy baconers, £3 15s to £4 5s; extra, to £4 10s; ordinary sorts, £3 to £3 10s, these prices being equivalent to 6½d to 7d per lb.

There were average yardings in all departments at Burnside last week, and prices for fat cattle and fat sheep were somewhat below those ruling of late. There were 252 head of fat cattle yarded. At the commencement of the sale prices were fully 20s per head below previous sale, but, several pens being passed, they firmed up to within 10s per head of last week's rates. The yarding on the whole consisted of well-finished bullocks. Quotations: Extra heavy bullocks to £15 12s 6d, good bullocks £11 10s to £14, medium bullocks £9 to £10 10s, extra heavy heifers to £13 17s 6d, good heifers £8 10s to £10 15s. The fat sheep penned totalled 2250, amongst which were several pens of exceptionally good wethers. Prices at the beginning of the sale were 1s 6d per head lower than previous week's rates, but towards the end sheep sold at up to late quotations. Quotations: Extra heavy wethers, at 35s 9d; heavy wethers, 27s to 33s; good wethers, 24s to 25s 6d; medium wethers, 21s to 22s; extra heavy ewes, at 31s. Twenty-one of the new season's lambs were penned, and sold at 20s to 28s per head. There was a medium entry of pigs, for which there was good competition.

HORSES' TEETH.

Many cases of so-called colic, and others of general unthriftiness, are attributable to faulty teeth. The construction of the horse's stomach is such (says the *Australasian*) that the food must be digested by the gastric juices and passed out quickly, if he is to get sufficient to eat. If the food is not presented to the stomach in a thoroughly masticated condition, and well mixed with saliva, delay in digestion takes place, and overloading of the stomach, which should be about two-thirds full for rapid digestion. The teeth must be in good order to insure that the food shall be properly prepared for the gastric juices; and in young horses, owing to faulty shedding of first teeth, in old horses owing to the edges becoming long and worn, proper mastication is often impossible. It is advisable, therefore, to frequently inspect the mouths of the horses, and especially in cases in which 'quids' of partly chewed food are found in the manger. A good horse master with a proper rasp can soon remedy any small irregularity; but in bad cases, if a vet. is available, it is better to secure his services, as with the proper instruments he can do the work in a very short time, accurately and without danger of blood poisoning. Bolt-ing the food, however, will cause just as much trouble, and is a habit with some horses, easily picked up where they are fed at boxes or troughs in a common yard. Every horse should be tied up to his own feed-box, even if stables are not used. Farmers veterinary clubs, which provide for the inspection of stock at regular intervals, are excellent for keeping valuable animals in good order, if an energetic officer can be secured.

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