

ON THE LAND

MARKET REPORTS.

At Burnside last week there was a medium yarding of all classes of fat stock, prices of prime heavy sheep being easier by from 1s to 1s 6d per head, while light and unfinished sorts declined about 2s on the previous sale's rates. Lambs, on the other hand, brought about 2s per head above late rates, owing principally to the activities of a freezing buyer. It is expected that exporters will be operating freely in a couple of weeks' time, and this will steady the market. Fat cattle: 172 yarded, which sold at about a par with the previous sale's rates. Prime bullocks made from £21 to £25, medium £18 to £19 10s, and lighter sorts from £15 to £17. Fat sheep: 1978 yarded, a proportion of which could only be classed as forward stores, and these did not meet with much competition. Prime heavy wethers made up to 44s 9d, medium 35s to 39s, lighter sorts 30s to 34s, and unfinished lots 22s 6d to 25s. Prime heavy ewes made up to 43s 6d, medium 32s to 35s, and light and aged 25s to 30s. Fat lambs: A fair yarding of good quality, a total of 441 head being offered. Competition was keen, freezing buyers being in the market, causing prices to advance from 1s to 1s 6d per head over the previous week's values. Prices ranged from 20s to 32s 6d per head. Pigs: A large yarding, which met with keen competition; in fact, a much larger number could have been disposed of. Values were firm at late rates. Best baconers made from 1s 1d to 1s 1½d per lb, and best porkers from 1s 1½d to 1s 2½d per lb.

At the Addington stock market last week there was a good yarding of fat cattle and lambs and an average one of fat and store sheep. The market for beef was practically similar to that of the previous week, and sheep were equally as firm, and lambs were a shade better, while store sheep recovered from the drop of the preceding sale, the average prices being from 3s to 3s 6d better. Store sheep met with spirited sale for all classes, particularly for forward lines of lambs and wethers, the recent beneficial rains having stimulated the market. Fat lambs: There was a good yarding of 5000 lambs, compared with 4300 in the previous week. Freezing buyers secured the bulk of the entry at values somewhat in excess of those ruling the preceding week, the prices averaging about 9½d per lb. Prime lambs 28s 6d to 33s 2d, medium 25s to 28s, lighter 22s 2d to 24s 11d. Fat sheep: There was a yarding of between eight and nine races, compared with 11 the preceding week. At the opening of the sale the demand was slightly easier, but speedily improved, and prices were generally fully as good as the previous week. Prime wethers to 44s 1d, medium 37s 3d to 42s 9d, lighter 28s 6d to 31s 1d, prime ewes 34s to 38s 6d, medium 29s to 33s 10d, lighter 23s 6d to 28s. Fat cattle: There was a yarding of 425, compared with 385 in the previous week. The market was firm, except for heavy prime, which eased slightly. A good proportion of the entry was secured by freezing buyers. Extra prime steers to £32, prime steers £20 10s to £26 10s, medium £16 to £19, lighter £12 12s 6d to £15 14s, prime heifers £15 10s to £17 5s, lighter £8 12s 6d to £14 5s, prime cows £13 to £16 5s, light and inferior £9 7s 6d to £12 15s, average price per 100lb £2 15s. Fat pigs: Heavy baconers up to £8 10s, ordinary to £6 10s, average price per lb 11½d to 1s; heavy porkers £4 15s to £5 10s, ordinary £3 15s to £4 10s, average price per lb 1s 0½d to 1s 1d; choppers £8.

THE HORSE'S FOOT.

That portion of a horse's foot known as the frog is a peculiar structure of horn, triangular in shape, and, though situated between the bars, it is only attached at its upper border, leaving a space below which allows for expansion without the pressure being distributed to the whole foot. Under natural conditions the frog is full and large, with considerable elasticity; the bulbs plump and rounded. Too often in the foot of animals that have been shod it is found small and dry and shrivelled. This condition is not nearly so common as it was some years ago, for smiths have learnt that Nature intended it to bear on the ground, and not be cut away. It is peculiar that the more wear it gets the better it develops.

INFERIOR QUALITY MILK.

An individual test of each cow's milk (says a writer in an English journal) will often reveal the fact that some animals in the herd are yielding milk of inferior quality. There are cows of this type, particularly some of the heavy-milking Shorthorns, in a great many mixed dairy herds, and it requires the admixture of better quality milk from richer-milking animals to bring the bulk up to the proper standard. But at certain times of the year, when even the richer milk deteriorates in quality, then it is evident that the bulk will scarcely come within the margin of 3 per cent. of butter-fat.

Cows of all kinds have individual characteristics which it is impossible to check or control in any way, whether by feeding or different treatment. So we may find that one animal utilises a greater proportion of food to produce a given quantity of milk than another animal which, under the same treatment, produces just as much milk.

The heavier feeder usually puts a large proportion of the food "on her back," but we do not feed dairy cows for flesh production, and, as far as dairying purposes are concerned, that extra quantity of food is wasted, and in these days there is no room for waste or extravagance of any kind. Cows of this nature should be sold, and replaced with animals of a more genuine dairy type.

The quantity and quality of the food fed to dairy cows have no influence upon the secretion of milk. Cow-feeders of bygone years thought to improve the quality of the milk by feeding rich, extra-nourishing foods, but it is now shown that this is impossible; at least, the very slight extent to which the milk may be enriched is out of all proportion to the extra cost of food involved.

On the other hand, apart from all scientific and theoretical conclusions that have been arrived at, the fact remains that a cow's rations cannot be cut down to the lowest proportions sufficient to maintain her in normal bodily health without in time interfering with her milk yield.

At first, neither the quantity nor the quality of the milk would show any depreciation, for the cow would draw on her reserve store of nourishment in the shape of fat and surplus flesh. This would be very quickly utilised, however, and then, even if the ordinary supply were still maintained, the quality would fall off to an appreciable extent. In some mountainous districts the winter diet of cows consists of little more than hay, and here we notice an alarming deficiency of butter-fat in the milk, even though the quantity may be up to the usual standard.

Foods containing an excess of water, as turnips, swedes, mangels, brewers' grains, watery grass, etc., are usually noticed to improve the milk yield, but these foods "water the milk through the cow" as a rule. When cows first go out to grass, after the period of winter feeding, there is always more or less disturbance in the milk yield. Grass in early spring is not of the most nutritious nature, and although it may provide a flush of milk, the quality of that milk will be inferior.

The supply of home-grown foods which have so far provided the basis of the winter ration—roots, hay, and straw—is falling short on many farms, for there were but scanty supplies of these foods at the best. Then, if the deficiency is not made up by a larger proportion of concentrated foods—cakes and meals, etc.—the fat content of the milk will most assuredly be decreased.

ON MISSING MASS.

(For the N.Z. Tablet.)

I dozed—the Sabbath sun was high,
And through the shutter, drawn,
I caught the gold of morning sky—
A thrush sang on the lawn;
Distinct I heard the mentor say:
Arise! and pray! this is God's day!
The Mass bell bids thee not delay—
Arise! thy homage pay!

But I to leave my couch was loth—
And sank into a sleep of sloth!

And startled from my dream—I woke—
The bell had ceased to toll—
And stern the mentor's sentence broke
Upon my truant soul:
O sluggard! thou shalt ever dread
That prayer unsaid—that hour ill-spent—
Christ called thee to the banquet spread,
And thou refused His Bread!

Each Sabbath morn the voice within
Reproves me of that ingrate sin.

—HAROLD GALLAGHER.

Christchurch.

Christian patience is a disposition that keeps us calm and composed in our frame, and steady in the practice of our duty under the sense of our afflictions, or in the delay of our hopes.—Evans.

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