

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

CORRESPONDENTS are requested, when desiring information through the Journal, in regard to disease in animals and plants, to forward, where possible, affected specimens, in order to facilitate a correct diagnosis of the trouble, and to ensure the best advice. In stating a question the most complete descriptive details should be furnished.

ERADICATION OF CALIFORNIAN THISTLE.

MR. C. MCGUINNESS, Mangatoki, writes as follows:—

Will you kindly let me know through your correspondence column whether any experiments have been made to kill Californian thistle with common coal-tar by the Agricultural Department? I have noticed that wherever tar has been spilt all herbage dies, and am of opinion that if a coat of tar was put over the thistle, with holes driven here and there with a bar and filled with tar, it might have the desired effect.

The Fields and Experimental Farms Division replies,—

While it is well recognized that the application of coal-tar has the effect of destroying weeds, it has to be remembered that it would be impracticable of application on an extensive area.

FERTILIZERS.

MR. W. B. FITCHETT, "Tiritiri," Kawhia, writes,—

Can you inform me whether the following manures may be safely mixed together without any harmful results: (1) Basic superphosphate and kainit; (2) basic superphosphate and nitrate of soda; (3) basic slag and kainit?

The Agricultural Chemist replies,—

These may be mixed if sown immediately after mixing.

PHALARIS BULBOSA.

"SUBSCRIBER," Riverlea, Taranaki, writes,—

Would the Department answer through the *Journal* the following:—

1. Would *Phalaris bulbosa* be a good grass to introduce in a patch of raupo swamp that is gradually drying up?
2. Do cattle eat it readily, or would it become coarse like tall fescue and become a nuisance; if so, would it be difficult to eradicate?

The Fields and Experimental Farms Division replies,—

Phalaris bulbosa is spreading in many swamps. It is readily eaten by cattle. It may not be a particularly valuable grass, but gives more winter feed than many of the other grasses. If sown with cocksfoot and rye-grass much more feed would probably be obtained. It is of a different character to tall fescue, and would not be likely to become a nuisance.

CLOVERS.

MR. G. A. READE, Pukerangi, Central Otago, writes,—

I forward under separate cover two forage plants of the trefoil family, which I have found growing together in masses on sunny banks at an Otago seaside resort, and it occurs to me they might be useful for surface-sowing on sheep-country in Central Otago