

MISCELLANEOUS QUERIES.

MR. J. E. LUCKENS, Lawson's Creek, Auckland Harbour, writes as follows:—

1. Where can I get the spineless cactus which Luther Burbank has evolved from the prickly pear and which produced 200 tons of fodder per acre?

2. Which is the right name for "Boyd's clover"—*Lotus hispidus* or *L. angustissimus*? Neighbours praise it highly; but I think *Lotus major* the best for this poor gum land.

3. Has sea-water any wholesale manurial properties? I watered some plants with it, but it killed them finally.

4. What is the best kind of goat to keep for milk; and do you think a goat dairy would pay, as some of my land is too rough for cows?

5. What would you recommend as food for milch-goats?

6. Which is the best butter-fat cow? Jersey, I believe; but, judging by some Holstein records, the latter is as good, and has the advantage of being a beef cow as well. I suppose Jerseys would eat less fodder, though?

The Fields and Experimental Farms Division replies,—

1. I would refer you to Luther Burbank himself, whose address is Los Angeles, California.

2. *Lotus angustissimus* is the correct name for Boyd's clover. This clover and *Lotus hispidus*, which is a closely allied species, are being very highly praised; but in localities where *Lotus major* thrives well the last-named is probably preferable to sow. *Lotus major* seed is, however, considerably dearer than *Lotus angustissimus*, and there seems no reason to think that the price will ever be low enough to sow it in any great quantity in a mixture.

The Agricultural Chemist replies,—

3. It is not advisable to water any crops with sea-water. Salt drilled in with the manure may prove useful for some crops, such as turnips, kale, rape, mangels, sugar-beet (grown for stock-food), asparagus, and plants whose ancestors inhabited marine or salty situations.

The Live-stock and Meat Division replies,—

4. Probably the best milch-goat of the British breeds is the English one, which has had a society for the improvement of the breed since 1879. The Scottish Lowlands goat is perhaps the next-best milker. Welsh and Irish goats are poor milkers, and are only in profit for a short period. The two best milking breeds are foreign, and both have been crossed with the English goat, greatly to the improvement of the latter. The one first imported was the Nubian. Pure specimens, however, cannot be obtained now. The other and much the best is the Swiss breed called the Toggenburg. It is rather a tall goat, measuring about 30 in. high at the shoulder. Neither sex has horns. The udder is well developed, with the teats far enough apart. It is stated that as much as 158 gallons in a season of over three hundred days has been obtained from them. I do not think there are any of the breed in this country, and they could not be imported from Switzerland owing to our regulations prohibiting live-stock from Continental countries. Specimens, however, could be obtained from Great Britain. We could not advise you as to whether a goat dairy would pay. It would depend on the demand you got for the milk. You would hardly make a success of it with the goats here, without crossing, as they would not give enough milk to be profitable.

5. Goats are browsing animals mainly, but will practically eat anything—all sorts of vegetables, potatoes, carrots, &c. A Swiss authority considers that in summer a goat will consume on an average 3 lb. of hay, 3 lb. of clover, and 10 lb. of green food per diem; and, in the winter, 6 lb. of roots, 2 lb. of hay, 3 lb. of clover, and $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. to 1 lb. of crushed oats. The crushed oats may also be given during the time the animal is in milk.

The Dairy-produce Division replies,—

6. It may be said that there is no "best" breed of dairy cattle amongst the various breeds of that class of stock, for there are unprofitable as well as profitable cows amongst all breeds of dairy cattle. As a breed the Jerseys are noted for a