

## CELERY APHIS.

MR. JAMES WARD, Esk Street, Invercargill, writes,—

We have had a specimen of celery sent us. It has blight, and our correspondent has lost two crops in the same way. I suggested that you might be able to tell us what to do with it. As the crop is going the same this year as last, an early reply would oblige so that some of the crop may be saved. We would be much obliged if you could tell us what to do with it. It is grown on a sandy soil, but there are no trees or shrubs near the plants.

The Orchards, Gardens, and Apiaries Division replies,—

The celery specimens forwarded are attacked by celery aphid. The plants should be sprayed with either tobacco-wash (using 1 lb. strong tobacco or 3 lb. waste tobacco, 3 lb. soft soap, and 30 gallons water), or use kerosene emulsion at the rate of 1 of the emulsion to 15 water. Directions for making the above sprays are given on the Department's spray leaflet, which may be obtained on application to the Department. A sprayer throwing a fine forcible spray is most suitable, and care should be taken to see that the under-sides of the plants are well covered.

## WORK ON FARMING.

MR. J. G. WILSON, Clonbern Road, Remuera, Auckland, writes,—

I should be glad if you could suggest me a good work on general farming, mainly with sheep, suitable for any one thinking of going in for the work as a beginner.

The Live-stock and Meat Division replies,—

Probably Morton's "Handbooks of the Farm," cost about a sovereign, and live-stock handbooks, for similar price, published by Vinton and Co., Chancery Lane, London E.C., would suit. Should advise you, if seriously thinking of taking up sheep-farming, to go for a year or so on a station.

## GRASSES.—RAMS.

"FARMER," Kawhia, writes,—

I shall be much obliged if you will answer the following questions through the medium of the *Journal* :—

1. Which of all the grasses of the couch variety is most nutritious ?
2. Which makes the best growth ?
3. Which is it that is sometimes called Kentucky blue-grass ?
4. Is the most nutritious as nutritious as *Danthonia pilosa* ?
5. Are Romney rams which have been used for three seasons, commencing as two-tooths, good for any further seasons ; and, if so, for how many ewes ?

The Biologist replies,—

The name "couch" is often applied to any grass that spreads by means of underground rhizomes, but the following species are the ones that are most frequently termed "couch-grass": (1) Smooth-stalked meadow grass or Kentucky blue-grass (*Poa pratensis*); (2) florin (*Agrostis stolonifera*); (3) twitch (*Agropyron repens*); (4) Indian doob-grass (*Cynodon dactylon*); (5) buffalo-grass (*Stenotaphrum glabrum*). As the term "couch-grass" is a general one, it is better not to apply it to any single species.

The idea of determining the value of grasses from the viewpoint alone of nutritiousness is by no means satisfactory, as the feeding-quality of grasses is likely to vary very much indeed on different soils and under varying climatic conditions. I place the following characters as of prime importance in determining what grasses are particularly suited to be used :—