

IMPROVING NEGLECTED ORCHARD.

MR. T. KEANE, Ararimu, via Drury, writes,—

Would you let me know through your *Journal*,—

1. The best method of improving a neglected orchard, where the trees have been allowed to grow without pruning or spraying and the grass to grow around them? What is the best manure; and ought they to be pruned now?

2. What would be the best spray for the checking of the disease on the leaves and stalks that I am sending you?

The Orchards, Gardens, and Apiaries Division replies,—

1. It is difficult to give detailed advice without seeing the trees. They may not be worth treatment. The Orchard Instructor for the district will visit you, and advise as to the cultivation, pruning, and spraying necessary, provided the trees have not been too much neglected to render treatment profitable.

2. The specimens sent indicate that the trees should be sprayed with Bordeaux mixture to control the fungus diseases present. A leaflet giving directions for mixing will be posted.

COW-GRASS ATTACKED BY DODDER.

MR. T. H. PILBROW, "Thornington," Glenpark, Otago, writes,—

The enclosed is a root of cow-grass with a growth of some kind. Will you please answer through your *Journal*, telling me what the growth is, or any other useful information? I had sown a paddock of about 80 acres mostly in cow-grass. It was cut for hay this summer, and I noticed a few patches like the enclosed—some of them 2 to 3 yards round. Where it appears it kills the clover completely. Should you require further information, I will be only too pleased to give it.

The Biologist replies,—

The cow-grass specimen sent is attacked by a South American species of dodder (*Cuscuta racemosa*). The dodders spread solely by means of their seeds, which are difficult to separate from those of the various clovers in which they are found. The presence of dodder in clover fields is generally indicated by the appearance of yellow-coloured patches. These patches should be immediately cut out close to the ground and the cuttings burned. This, if undertaken before the dodder flowers, will generally be found effective.

PULLETS MOULTING.

MR. T. HORTON, Christchurch, writes,—

I have a dozen in one pen of White Leghorns about six months old. Some of them laid for about three weeks, and then they have all gone into moult. They are well housed, well fed, and have proper attention. Would you kindly let me know what might be the cause, through the *Journal*?

The Live-stock and Meat Division replies,—

The birds have probably been subjected to a sudden change of food or quarters.

The steamer "Rotorua," which sailed from Wellington to London on the 1st instant, had on board 6,054 cases of apples for Montevideo, 5,656 cases being from the Nelson district, and the remainder from the Hastings district.

The steamer "Tainui," which sailed from Wellington to London on the 17th ultimo, took from the Dominion 5,017 cases of apples for Montevideo, 4,750 cases being from the Nelson district and 267 cases from Hawke's Bay. The vessel also shipped at Dunedin 504 sacks of potatoes for Rio de Janeiro.