

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.

WOOD-BORER.

S. H., Takapuna, Auckland, writes,—

Enclosed herewith please find specimens of the work of the wood-borer. The creature especially attacks willow and kahikatea. Can you kindly tell me, through your *Journal*, how sheds, tool-handles, baskets, &c., can be preserved from attack, and how, when once attacked, they can be saved?

The Director of the Orchards, Gardens, and Apiaries Division replies,—

Wood-boring Beetle.—I have tried various experiments in connection with the above, and will give briefly the results:—

When the backs of pieces of furniture, such as cupboards, were attacked I painted them with kerosene or corrosive sublimate, or any of the arsenic sprays. If the timber needing treatment is large, I take a common garden knapsack spray-pump, with cyclone nozzle, and spray the article or wall well with one of the arsenic sprays, preferably the arsenic and soda. This should be done in the early summer, before or during the emergence of the beetles. My first experiments were commenced years ago, and were conducted as follows: Large glass jars were obtained, and a piece of wood containing numerous "grubs" placed in each. To these were added two pieces of white-pine of equal sizes, one of which had been treated with one of the specifics mentioned, the other perfectly fresh. The result was that in every case the untreated piece was badly attacked before two years were over, while the poisoned piece was sound. Either the female realized that the treated wood was not a suitable place for the depositing of eggs, or the tiny "grubs" were poisoned before they had eaten into the timber. I have for many years recommended this treatment to persons communicating with me. I recognize that in affected dwellings it means removing the paper and spraying the walls thoroughly, possibly in some cases removing portions of the lining. I have been hoping to get the use for a couple of years of some old building so as to test the matter on a large scale, but up to the present have not been successful. However, the course above advocated has proved effectual as—(a) laboratory experiment, (b) on packing-cases and furniture, (c) on a fowlhouse. I also treated with arsenic, six years ago, some white-pine timber of which I built a stable, and so far can find no trace of attack, although a piece of board not sprayed and loosely nailed in one corner for the purposes of comparison has numerous holes.

The following are directions for mixing the arsenic-and-soda spray: Proportions—1 lb. white arsenic, 2 lb. washing-soda, 70 gallons lime-water. Preparation—Place the arsenic in 2 gallons of water in which 2 lb. washing-soda has been dissolved, and boil until arsenic is thoroughly dissolved. As this will produce a liquid almost like clear water, and is, of course, extremely poisonous, it is advisable to use some simple colouring-matter to prevent mistakes.

FUNGUS DISEASE.

"SUBSCRIBER," Port Chalmers, writes,—

I am forwarding under separate cover four varieties of plants attacked by, I believe, a fungoid disease. Can I be informed, through your *Journal*, of the name of the disease, and of any means of preventing it? No. 1, *Gaillardia*: The balls of fungi have formed inside the stalk, and are attached still. When attacked in this form the