

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

IN every instance a question to which an answer is desired in these columns must be accompanied by the full name and the postal address of the inquirer, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith. The question should be written on one side of the paper only.

RED WATER IN COWS.

“SUBSCRIBER,” Toko :—

Would you kindly give me some information as to the cause of red water in cows, also a cure for the same. I lost five cows last September from this complaint, about three weeks after calving. I also know and heard of other farmers who had serious losses from the same cause.

The Live-stock Division :—

This cattle complaint as met with in New Zealand is due to dietetic trouble, such as giving turnips (especially when frosted) to cows in calf. It is also apparent in certain districts in the spring of the year, when the grass is young and sappy. Treatment consists of a change to pasture containing less succulent herbage, and the animal should be given hay, chaff, &c. Any foods rich in albuminoids, such as eggs, have been proved beneficial. It is advisable to keep a rock-salt lick in the paddocks; in these cases it is particularly valuable. Although scouring is usually the first symptom noticed, an aperient drench should be given as follows: Mag. sulph. $\frac{3}{4}$ lb., powdered ginger $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., mixed in a quart of gruel.

POTATO-SCAB.

“FARMER,” Te Waiwai :—

Please state what would be the best way to treat seed potatoes to prevent scab on the ensuing crop.

The Fields Division :—

Potato-scab is caused by a fungus known as *Oöspora scabies*. The spores may enter the soil through using for seed potatoes that are affected with scab, also through the manure from stock (particularly pigs) that have been fed with scabby potatoes. The disease spores may be in the soil and, owing to plenty of acidity in the ground, do not make much headway in attacking the tubers; but when lime is applied in quantity it greatly encourages the disease. This is particularly the case on stiffish clay soils. For this reason we usually recommend not planting potatoes within at least a year after liming. The treatment for potato-scab is as follows: On affected soils (1) adopt a rotation of crops, varying in length from three to five years; (2) plant potatoes after clover; (3) avoid alkali fertilizers, such as lime, wood-ashes, muriate of potash, &c. (use sulphate of potash in preference to muriate); (4) avoid manure from stock fed on scabby potatoes; (5) disinfect tubers with a solution of formalin, and plant only sound tubers. This may be done by soaking uncut tubers for two hours in formalin solution (1 pint formalin to 30 gallons water). Spread out the potatoes to dry on clean grass. Bags, &c., should also be disinfected. In the case of clean soils plant only sound tubers and disinfect them with formalin. When feeding scabby potatoes to pigs, boil the potatoes first.

Next year you had better grow your potatoes (treated with formalin) on new ground that has not been limed for some years, and on which farmyard manure from stock fed on scabby potatoes has not been used.