

The Farm.

PREVENTION.—The old proverb of "shutting the stable door when the steed is stolen" applies daily to the conduct of a great many of us. The loss every year by disease among live stock is enormous, not only as regards the stock themselves but their produce in milk, wool, and work. This loss might be reduced at least three-fourths by measures of prevention, and yet these measures are not taken. It is now a considerable time since we had any very extensive invasion of foreign infection among our flocks and herds, and we have been also tolerably free from the fluke disease, scab, and blackleg. However, the germs of infection have not been entirely eradicated, for every week still supplies its quota of cases of pleuro-pneumonia and sheep scab. As far as pleuro-pneumonia is concerned, it is principally confined to the neighbourhood of Dublin. Last week there were 18 cases in all, but 4 were at Listowel in Kerry. One case in our island (unless energetic measures are taken) is enough to spread the infection all over it. One single germ of an infectious disease, so small as to be scarcely visible through a powerful microscope, is capable of indefinite multiplication in a suitable medium, and of spreading the disease through thousands and millions of stock. As long, therefore, as a single case of disease exists, and for some time after, the country is not safe from its spread. By the efforts of the authorities (especially at the ports), and by the fact that Ireland is an exporting rather than an importing country, infection does not at present spread rapidly in it. This, however, ought not to put us off our guard; and as our principal natural capital appears at present to be our flocks and herds, we would impress upon the minds of our farmers the necessity of taking preventive measures against the spread of disease. Let us take the case of infectious and contagious diseases, usually called epizootics. These all arise from certain germs which find their way into the blood either from the air or from actual contact with diseased animals, or by direct transfusion or inoculation through the skin in a wound, or otherwise. If we sow some grains of wheat in good rich soil at any season of the year except the middle of winter, they will, in a short time, spring up green above the surface. But if we sow them on a bare flagstone they will remain on it without starting into life. They are, in the latter case, not supplied with the medium suitable for their growth. Now, as regards the germs of infection, which may be likened to the grains of wheat, most animals correspond to the good soil. There are some, however, which resemble the flagstone, as in these the germs pass out again without themselves multiplying, and without affecting the animal, without being in high condition, the better is its chance of escaping. It should, therefore, be the object of the owner of stock to keep it generally in such condition as a measure of prevention. Horses should be kept at regular work or exercise, regularly and carefully fed and groomed, and the state of their stomachs attended to in time by appropriate remedies. These animals are not so liable to infectious diseases as cattle, principally because they get plenty of exercise, and are not allowed to get too fat. Cattle, during the winter, should have their strength kept up by proper feeding and shelter, and care should be taken that the water given them to drink be clean, and that, if they are house-fed, the byre be kept clean, ventilated, and drained. If these points are well attended to, the young stock, as well as milch cows and fattening beasts, will have strength of constitution to resist disease, whether infectious or otherwise, better than when they are neglected. Sheep should be kept on the driest pasture possible, and every effort should be made to keep it dry by means of drainage. Some other feeding besides the grass should be supplied them, and they should be examined daily. The fences, too, should be kept in such order as to preclude the possibility of their wandering outside of bounds and thereby importing scab and some other affection. Pigs require to be kept dry and warm during winter, and they should get some coal ashes and sulphur from time to time. In all cases of house-fed animals, whether horses, cattle, sheep, or poultry, disinfectants should be used now and then when cleaning out the farm buildings. Above all things, isolate stock as much as possible. Let the different classes of animals have different enclosures, leaving some always vacant, so that they can have a change of feeding and not be allowed to foul the pasture. Let the fences to these enclosures be always kept in good order. Another means of destroying many disease germs in pasture, besides drainage, is leaving them vacant for a time, during which a top-dressing of quicklime mixed with gaslime and salt should be applied. The top-dressing will destroy many germs, and the absence of animals, to take in those which are left, will give time for many other germs to die out. Then, again, all new purchases of cattle and sheep should be kept separate and perfectly isolated for some weeks, so that if there is any incipient disease in them it may have time to show itself, and may not in the meantime be communicated to the home stock. All cases suspected of pleuro-pneumonia, foot-and-mouth disease, or sheep scab, should be at once separated from the rest and reported to the constituted authorities, so that, if necessary, compensation may be obtained. If farmers reported these cases at once it is probable that these diseases would be long ere this stamped out completely. It is to be feared that many cases of epizootic pleuro-pneumonia are hidden, thus doing incalculable injury to all our flocks and herds, and retaining the germs of this disease in the country. No stock-keeper should be without a four-gallon can of liquid carbolic acid, so that he may always have some for use when required. Milk, too, being so easily liable to contamination, should be well looked after. That which is taken from cows suspected of any disease, should be kept separate till such time as the doubt may be resolved into a positive or negative certainty. In putting up animals to fatten, the process should not be unduly hastened, especially at the beginning. The change in the kind and quality of the feeding given should not be too sudden, but should take place gradually. Newly purchased pigs require to be treated with great care to avoid surfeiting them, and should at first receive a dose or two of a mild purgative. In calf, cows should not be allowed to become too fat for fear of puerperal

fever. Poultry, to be kept in health, require an extensive run, and some lime and ashes, also cleanliness, dryness, and warmth in their roosting-places. If the above precautions are adopted, infection from outside will have great difficulty in entering; and if it does effect an entrance the constitutions of the farm stock will be strengthened against it and it may not obtain a hold. The above are the principal preventive measures that occur to us as being useful during the winter both against ordinary and infectious diseases, and we strongly advise our farmers, while they have yet time, and before another epidemic of disease visits us, to adopt them all without exception.—*Dublin Freeman.*

THE GARDEN.

THE HYACINTH.—The hyacinth has long been an inmate of our gardens, where it is esteemed one of our earliest and most beautiful spring flowers; and for producing a brilliant display in the greenhouse or sitting-room during the winter months it is scarcely surpassed by any other bulbous plant. It is propagated by seeds for obtaining new varieties, but as these are mostly imported from the Continent, that mode of propagation is seldom practised in this country. The seed may be sown in September in light sandy mould, and covered to the depth of half an inch. During the winter protection should be given from frost; and when the leaves die down, one inch of fine mould should be sifted over the plants, and in the following year they must be treated in the same way. In the third year the bulbs may be taken up, when the leaves turn yellow, and afterwards they should be treated as old bulbs, only not covered so deeply. The seedlings flower in the fourth or two following years. The offsets are removed soon after the bulbs are taken up; they should be planted two inches deep, in a bed of light soil, deeply dug, where they will merely require to have their flower stems cut off for two years after planting, and to be treated in other respects like the old bulbs. They may be planted in the autumn of the third year in a bed for blooming. Although the hyacinth will bloom well in any good garden soil of a light nature, yet to flower in perfection and maintain the bulbs in a healthy condition a bed should be specially prepared for its growth. The situation should be rather high, and well exposed to the sun; and if superfluous moisture does not readily pass away the ground should be deeply and thoroughly drained. The soil ought to be dug out in August to the depth of at least two feet, and replaced with prepared compost. As to what is the most suitable some diversity of opinion exists. The Dutch use soil of the lightest description—their own light, sandy mould, rendered still lighter by the addition of fine sand, and enriched with cowdung or decayed leaf-mould. In this country soil of a heavier description is usually employed, but there can be no doubt that sandy soil is the most suitable. It is in such that the plant grows naturally; it is in such that the Dutch cultivate the fine varieties which they yearly export to all parts of Europe; and it is in such alone, we believe, that there is any prospect of preserving these for any considerable time in our climate—cold and sunless in spring and summer, as compared with that which the plant enjoys in its eastern home. We would therefore recommend a compost of two parts light friable turfy loam, or sandy loam and peat, and decayed leaf-mould sand, and rotten cow manure, one part of each, the whole well mixed, laid in a heap for some months previous to use, and occasionally turned. The bed having been filled with the prepared soil, so that, allowing for settling, it may be about four inches above the adjoining path, should be levelled in October, keeping the centre two inches higher than the sides for a bed of the ordinary width—four feet. Planting may then be proceeded with, placing the bulbs eight inches apart, and at a depth of from three to seven inches, according to the size of the bulb, the nature of the variety (whether strong-growing or the contrary), and the lightness of the soil. The largest bulbs, and the strongest-growing varieties, should be planted deepest; but in heavy soils it is not advisable to cover so deeply as in those of a lighter description. As a general rule, four or five inches may be taken as good average depths in light soil. A little silver sand ought to be placed beneath each bulb, which, when placed in its position, should likewise be just covered with sand. After planting, no attention is required except protecting the bed from severe frost by a layer of turf-mould, tan, straw, or some protecting material; but this covering should be removed before the plants push in spring, when they may be protected by hoops and mats, but these must be taken off whenever the weather is favourable; otherwise more damage is likely to arise by the leaves and stems being drawn up than from frost. When in bloom, an awning of calico or thin canvas may be placed over the bed, to screen the flowers from sun during the heat of the day; but it should be taken off before evening, and after flowering this cover may be kept on during heavy rain. At all other times, however, the plants should be freely exposed to air and light. The flower stems should be broken immediately after the bloom has faded, as the production of seed will tend to exhaust the bulbs. These must be taken up when the foliage assumes a yellow colour, and the leaves having been cut off, spread out on a dry bottom in an airy place which is shaded from strong sun, to complete their maturity. During the process of drying they ought to be occasionally turned, and any loose earth adhering to the roots shaken off and all unsound bulbs picked out. When dry, the rough outside skin, fibres, and offsets may be removed if they part readily from the bulbs, which may then be placed, without touching each other, in open drawers with perforated bottoms, in baskets, or on shelves, in a dry, airy place, where they should be occasionally looked over, and any which exhibit symptoms of unsoundness carefully removed.

Judges of the Supreme Court in Arkansas prohibit by formal orders the sale of liquors within a distance of three miles from a public or private school.

The Carmelites of New Orleans received a cablegram from Rome, announcing that the petition presented by their Rev. Father General had been favourably received.