

On the whole, then, it may perhaps appear doubtful whether the mould in the cases quoted above was the real cause of mischief, so much as the decomposition which the several substances had undergone, though it must be remembered that in such cases it is absolutely impossible to separate the parasite completely from the matrix on which it grows, the spawn or mycelium penetrating in every direction, and perhaps being equal in quantity to the threads which appear externally.

It is not necessary for us to enter into the peculiar symptoms presented by the several horses. It is sufficient to state that they were upon the whole such as would be caused by the administration of a narcotic-irritant poison, like that of fungi. Whether, however, the ill effects produced were due to decomposition of the oats themselves, or to the mould which grew upon them, the lesson is precisely the same, namely, to give a caution against the use generally of old food. Mouldy hay and mouldy grain alike re-sure in the end to be the dearest.

Should we be fortunate enough to obtain a sample, attention shall be paid to this and other matters arising from the question, which even its present imperfect form can scarcely fail to be interesting.—M. J. B., in *Gardener's Chronicle*.

Progress of Wages in Scotland and in Ireland.

At the monthly meeting of the Statistical Society, held at St. James' Square, London—Sir Isaac Newton, Bart., in the chair—a paper was read by Mr. Frederick Purdy on the state of agricultural wages in Scotland and Ireland. The writer commenced by referring to a paper on English agricultural wages, read by him in May last, and to the circumstances of the subsequent issue of a parliamentary return for Scotland, and one for Ireland, both modelled on the English return, and both for the same period—the half year ended at Christmas, 1860. Dividing Scotland into three groups—viz., the northern, containing nine counties, from Shetland to Kincardine, the men's wages were 12s. 6d. per week on the average; women's, 5s. 6d.; and children's (under 16), 4s. That the men's average earnings by task-work were 13s. 6d. In three of the counties, men's harvest wages were 14s., 15s., and 19s. respectively. The midland group embraces nine counties, beginning with Forfar and ending with Bute, the men's wages were 13s. 2d.; the women's, 5s. 7d.; and children's 4s. The task-

work wages of the men 14s. 8d. a week. The southern group contained the thirteen remaining counties. The men's, women's, and children's wages were 13s. 2d., 6s., and 4s. 9d. respectively; the task-work wages, 15s. 3d. In some of the midland districts the harvest wages were very high, as, in Dumbarton, 21s.; Forfar, 25s.; and 26s. 6d. in Perthshire.

The statistics of the cost of the food consumed, and of the clothes worn by the Scotch peasantry, both in the present and the former times, were next treated of by the writer, with a view to illustrate the command which the money wages at the respective periods gave the labourer over the articles of his consumption.

The Irish returns were discussed under each province. In Ulster, the wages of the men during the half year averaged 7s. 3½d. per week; the women, 4s.; and the children, all the latter being less than 16 years of age, 3s. 2d. It was noticed that in Ireland the wages of one woman and of one child were together generally equal to those of one man; but that in Scotland the men's wages were considerably above the remuneration obtained by a woman and a child together. The task-work earnings of men in Ulster were 9s. 4d. a week. The Co. Naught men had 7s.: the women, 3s. 11d.; and children, 3s. 1d.; men's task-work, 8s. 10½d. In Leinster, men obtained 7s.; women 3s. 9d.; and children, 2s. 9d.; the task-work earnings of the men, 9s. 9d. Finally, in Munster, the men were paid 7s. 2½d.; the women, 4s. 3d.; and the children 3s.; the task work earnings of the men, 9s. 2d.

It appeared that taking the wages of the agricultural labourer as unity, the weaver was paid 1½, the shoemaker 2, the tailor 2, and the baker 2½, the carpenter 2½, and the bricklayer and mason 3 times as much at the same time and the same districts throughout Ireland.

The paper concluded by bringing the principal facts for the different parts of the United Kingdom together. It was shown that men's wages in England and Wales averaged 11s. 6d.; in Scotland, 12s. 9d.; and in Ireland, 7s. 1d. That in 23 years the rise in the English wages had only been 12 per cent., but that in Scotland, at an interval of twenty years, the rise was 42½ per cent., and in Ireland over 57 per cent. The fact of the low rate of increase in England, as compared with Scotland, was dwelt upon; there were special causes why the rate in Ireland, however gratifying, should not excite surprise. It was strenuously maintained that "the English wages were kept down by two causes—viz., the cruel and impolitic settlement of lands, and the large expenditure for out-door relief. Is it not manifest that when we distribute in England £3,000,000 a year, as untested relief, among the labouring population by the hands of the employers of labour, we place at the disposal of the latter an instrument as powerful as it is pernicious for depressing the fair wages of

Headaches are sometimes produced by the clouds of which rising up from the mouldy hay when taking food; and the same effect has been observed to arise from the spores of such moulds as the common species of *Aspergillus* in other situations, when produced in excessive abundance.