

**Questions and Answers.**  
Miscellaneous.

**Testing Soil.**

What is the method of testing soil with litmus paper?  
B. M. T.  
Ans.—Blue litmus paper is applied to moist soil and if it is sour the blue paper will be turned red.

**Treatment for Smut.**

1. The dry treatment for smut in oats, which was described in "The Farmer's Advocate" last year, proved very successful with us, but we have forgotten the amount of formalin to use.

2. What would be a good mixture of grain to sow for pasture for milch cows? What time should it be sown to give pasture after haying?  
W. H. R.

Ans.—1. The dry treatment was again fully described in a recent issue of our publication. The proportion is one part of formalin to one part of water. One pint of this solution is sufficient to treat 25 bushels of oats.

2. A mixture of oats, barley and wheat has been recommended for summer pasture, but there is just a little danger from the cattle eating barley if it should be smutted. We really see no advantage in sowing anything but clear oats. For a good crop they should be sown at the regular seeding time and then pastured off just as they are coming in head. Of course, this would give pasture a little earlier than you are wanting it, but it would give the regular pasture a chance to get a fresh start, and then the oats will take on a second growth and give fair picking during early fall.

**Canker Mouth.**

I have some nice birds and they are in good condition as to weight and vigor, but about three months ago they developed a disease which resembles canker in the mouth, and which I have no trouble in curing if I get it in its early stage, but in the advanced stage it is very stubborn to deal with; in fact, I lost three birds recently before I was aware that they were diseased. I have been feeding wheat, corn, roots and mash, and for a little while was feeding some burnt grain. Do you suppose this would cause the trouble? The pen is kept clean and I disinfect it regularly.

H. G. H.

Ans.—It is a debatable point among scientists as to whether roup, canker and chicken pox are not all one and the same disease, and there has been developed recently an antitoxin treatment for this trouble, but our experience here with it so far has not been satisfactory, and up to the present time we could not advise its use unless we get better results.

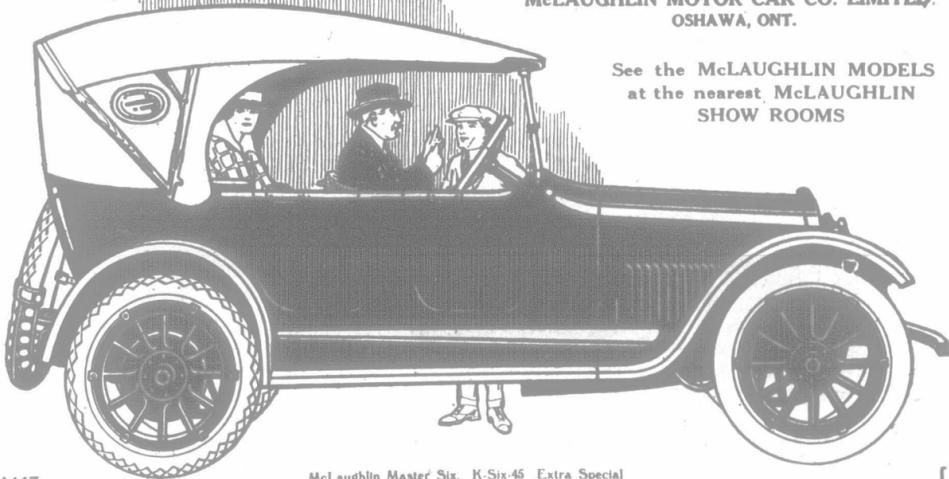
Now then as to the cause of canker in the bird's mouth, apparently it is a disease that is much more common from January to June than at any other season of the year and develops most readily when anything cuts the bird's mouth, that is to say if two male birds get picking at each other through a wire fence and cut their mouths they are almost sure to develop canker. In this respect the burnt grain might possibly be a cause but it is doubtful. On the other hand, where one bird in a pen develops canker it spreads very easily and, as your correspondent says, is most difficult to diagnose until the birds are real bad, when treatment is usually too late. We consider it a good practice to give the birds a dose of salts at the rate of one pound to one hundred birds, every week when we have any suspicion of the trouble. Give the sick birds a teaspoonful or more. As to treatment of the individual birds it is sometimes successful but in many cases not so. About all that can be done is to swab out the white patches in the bird's mouth with some powdered blue stone; others touch the parts with carbolic acid; and others with potassium permanganate. None are absolutely sure in their action so far as we are aware. Keep the house dry and free from draft, and ordinarily the birds will right themselves if they get a chance.  
W. R. G.

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