

The Spring Query Fever.

Monday being the first day of the week is always a busy day. It is "wash" day in most houses, and "clean-up" day in some offices. It seems strange that following a day set apart for "rest" the mail should be so heavy. With the chores, church services, and a copy of the Sunday edition of the daily paper, which tells not only what has happened during the past seven days, but gives an extremely accurate account of what is going to happen during the next seven, what time should a person have to sit down and in a clear, bold hand enumerate anywhere from one to seventeen of the most perplexing conundrums which confront him in his daily doings? These questions are often of such great importance that the writer becomes so agitated and finally so deeply engrossed in the subject that he almost reaches a state of coma, or soars in some spiritual or ethereal realm far from the plane of ordinary mortals, and entirely forgets his earthly name or at least forgets to sign it. As soon as he gets back to "terra firma" he promptly folds the piece of paper containing the complicated queries, whether it be the back of last month's sheet from the calendar, the fly leaf from the latest cook book, the brown paper which served as the wrapper for Jimmie's shoes on the way back from the cobbler's, or the finest piece of perfumed onion-skin sold at the corner's leading stationers, and places it in that oblong covering of a multitude of sins—an envelope, and through the excellency of His Majesty's Mail it reposes on the desk of an all wise editor sometime during Monday's clean up.

Some writer has said, "It is man's destiny still to be longing for something, and the gratification of one set of wishes but prepares the unsatisfied soul for the conception of another." So it is with questions; one consignment answered, another asked. Often the mania for asking so grips the interrogator that, exhausting all new lines of thought, to make a list long enough to be worthy the attention of the person of great knowledge he adds a few which have been answered in recent issues, but the particular copy of the paper in which they appeared has been used to cover the last basket of eggs which was taken to the grocery, and the grocer retained it to start his fire in the morning or perhaps Maggie folded it up and used it to protect her plump little hand while doing last week's ironing, or maybe the "kids" chewed it up into "wads" to throw at each other in school. "Articles come and articles go (back), but questions come on forever."

A bright child of three can ask more questions in a half hour than a professor can answer in a life-time, yet one or two human editors are expected to propound sound, logical, unquestionably correct solutions for all the questions which travel through the cerebrums and cerebellums of everybody over three years of age, whether the questions come to them during sane moments or are the result of "nightmares." All these must be answered "immediately," or "in your next issue." Small wonder if a query editor gets a bit impatient or imbibes once in a while. No wonder that when an occasional subscriber delivers his queries in person, he has to dig the editor out of a conglomeration of dictionaries, encyclopaedias, doctor books, cook books, veterinary works, and all manner of authorities from Webster and Shakespeare down to the blue books and bulletins so generously supplied by our thoughtful governments of the present day. When the man wanted is found, he in quest of information, while approaching filled with awe at meeting so great a personage, is usually almost speechless when he beholds a mere man (flesh and blood) doing the work. Really he marvels "how one small head could carry all he knew," but sometimes becoming a little skeptical after seeing the pile of available information (books) at the editor's command, he is inclined to make light of the advice given from the latter's personal knowledge, and leaves abruptly, saying, "I have tried that and it wasn't any good," or "I don't think it will work." We feel greatly offended upon such occasions. Our estimation of our own ability sinks lower and lower, until we are again buried deeply in prepared authorities. Nevertheless it is hard to "stick" us! We know a little ourselves, know some clever men and know where a lot of books are kept.

But it is the questions not discussed in any practical works which bother the walking encyclopaedias of the present day. Here's a good one. "How many eggs does a hen lay before she sits?" Now, how many does she? After looking through all the poultry works in an up-to-date library and reading carefully Prof. W. R. Graham's bulletin, we don't know. Some young hens do not sit at all; neither do some very fat hens which "roost" most of the time. We are seriously thinking of buying a hen of each of some fifty or more breeds, and to be sure that

we get accurate information have these cooped on the ledge along the front of our offices where we may be able to observe all their many movements, including egg production. We hope to have definite information on this subject later.

Poultry problems are particularly puzzling. Another wishes to know how to keep turkeys at home. Get a piece of strong cord and fasten it securely to one of the lower appendages on each bird, and tie the other end of the cord to a tree, fence post, or some other solid object. Be careful to renew the cord when the old one gets frayed. If the cord is scarce and wire is plentiful, clip one wing and place the birds on a certain spot, and build the wire around them as a fence. How simple! If children are plentiful, six or eight of them might be assigned the job of turkey herding, provided there are no creeks in which to fish or bathe, and provided also the "marble" season is over.

"What causes cattle to die?" Now, sometimes they die by being hit with a hammer after which a knife is thrust into their throats. If this does not kill them cut off the tail directly behind the ears, and the animal thus deprived of nostrils cannot breathe any longer so dies. Cattle also get sick and die. There are at least several fatal diseases, as tuberculosis, apoplexy, indigestion and nervous breakdown, the latter disease also being prevalent among query editors. More on this question later.

"What is the most effective method of exterminating sparrows?" Here is a conundrum. Slip up very quietly behind the birds while they are feeding upon the heads of standing wheat. Have a little salt in your hand and place not less than, and not more than 15-17 of an ounce on each bird's tail. A guaranteed cure if the precaution is also taken to wring the bird's necks during the process of the operation. If this seems impracticable get a good gun, some powder and small shot, and a person used to such weapons and not likely to do himself or anyone else bodily harm.

it ruin him for breeding purposes?" No comment.

"Pigs fight, please say what to do?" When two "human" pigs get into such difficulty some one usually separates them. This seems logical treatment for the four-footed swine.

"We held a post-mortem on a bantam hen; she died; what ailed her?" Was the post-mortem held before or after she died? Fearing the operation she must have succumbed.

If this epistle does not soon cease there will be a more serious post-mortem to be held, a result of "nerves", or of severe punishment from an anxious clientelle seeking sensible information.

However, this may not be a joke. It is more than a joke. Moral: Always think for yourself before asking a question. Don't send away 100 miles for an answer you can turn up at home. Write plainly on one side of the paper only, and on clean writing paper. Always sign your name and give your post office address plainly. Never ask questions which have been answered in recent issues. Preserve all copies of the paper. Never ask foolish questions. Always give particulars in full, especially when asking about diseases. Never expect to get a question answered "immediately" for such is generally impossible, and always remember that the query editor is a busy man and human.

Well the afternoon mail has just arrived with more questions, so au revoir.

PERPLEXED PETE.

HORSES.

For the light mare select a light sire and for the heavy mare a heavy sire. There is little or no excuse for crossing these two extreme types.

Is the stallion getting sufficient exercise or is his exercise increased in the same proportion as his feed is increased during the last month of preparation for the season?

Did you ever try unharnessing the horses for their noon spell during the close "muggy" days of seed time? This entails a little extra labor but it is worth it.

April is usually a hard month on horses. Make this April as easy for them as possible by attending carefully to their special needs at this season.

Don't forget that the colt, or in-foal mare working beside the big gelding may have due consideration for the difference in strength by giving them the "long-end" of the double-tree.

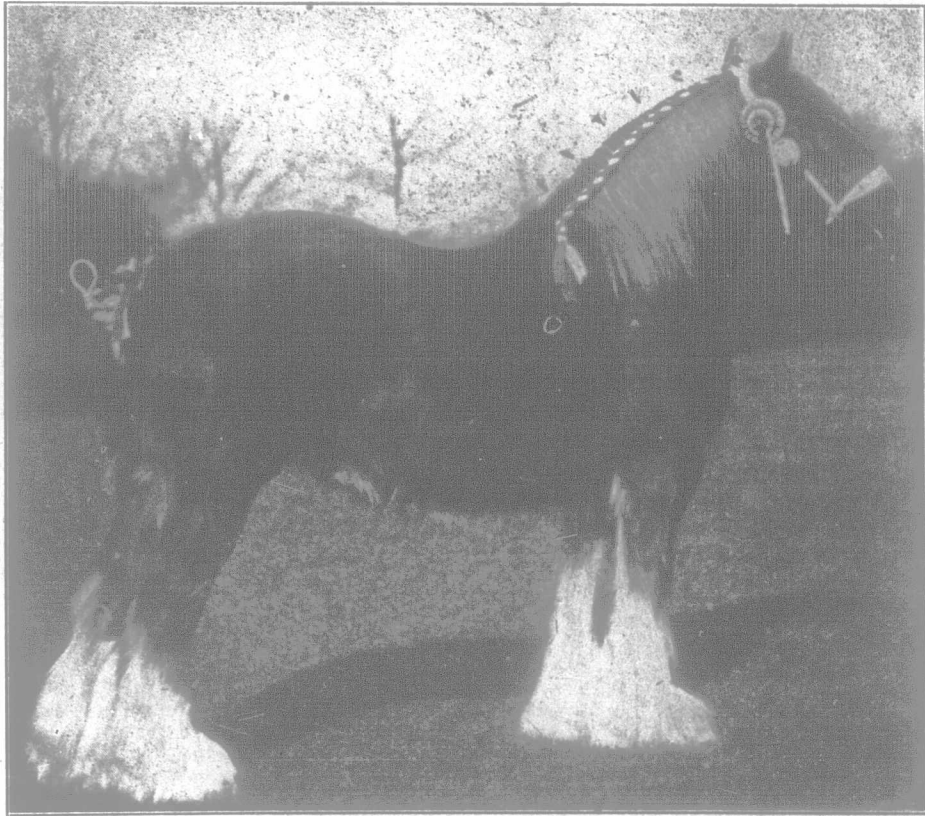
The ninth day after the mare foals is one of the best possible times to return her to the

stallion. She is usually in oestrus then and if bred is likely to conceive.

If your mare has foaled early and is being used at the spring work do not allow her to go to the colt in an over-heated condition. Such often causes serious digestive derangements in the foal.

In another month the breeding season opens. Have you decided upon the horse to which your mares are to be bred? It is folly to put this matter off until the last minute and then take the "handiest" stallion whether he be good or indifferent.

Many make the mistake of suddenly increasing the grain ration of the horse the very day he commences spring work. This should not be done. By gradual increases the ration should be up nearly the maximum before the heavy work actually begins and the horses accustomed to the increase. The animal called upon to do heavy work after months of comparative idleness has sufficient strain placed upon him without being



Dunsmore Chessie.

Winner of first in her class and champion mare at the London Shire Show recently held. Owned by Sir Walpole Greenwell.

More intricate than any mere "animal" queries are those of affairs between man and man, or worse yet between man and woman. A correspondent recently wanted to know how a girl could be compelled to give back a "wring" which had been bestowed upon her by an ardent and admiring youth before the very eyes of another of the genus Homo. This question was fully answered in a recent issue by an expert on such matrimonial mix-ups. Don't fail to read it, as it may save you a lot of trouble.

"I have a cow with a wart." Poor cow. This trouble has been cured so many times through these columns that the query editor actually answers it now without looking it up. Small need of it ever being asked again when this is the case.

"Would a home course of education be advisable?" How can the poor child avoid such an education with plum trees, apple trees and all other kinds of trees growing switches so near at hand? The recollections of "home" education are vivid in most minds, although applications were made lower down.

"If I clip the tail feathers off my drake will