

highways. In any case, it is no use blaming bad fences for useless dogs."

There was substance in his last sentence if not much, yet, in his first; but fences have caused trouble since the first man enclosed a garden. I don't think there was a fence round Eden, but there were "tottering fences" in the days of King David—and I feel sure, continuing rows about them. It was never easy for one man to keep off the grass of another man, and it is not easy yet. Every schoolboy used to know about the enclosure squabbles in England, which lasted in one form or another for five hundred years; but it surprised me to discover in America that fences are still inflammable in the Middle West. The question there is not fences or no fences, but fencing by me or fencing by you. They do not, as we do here, fence all the land along all the roads, but enclose those areas only in which livestock are kept. But they still fight about the financial responsibility for the fences. Must livestock men fence their animals in, or corn, fruit, and potato men fence them out? As far as I could see it was the hogs and cattle that paid, the corn and potatoes that went free; but I was told that the fires still smouldered in the wider open spaces. The soil-tillers argue that those who run livestock should be responsible for the damage their animals do if they are allowed to wander. The cattle-grazers say that they were the first occu-

piers, that the cultivators came with their eyes open and must protect themselves if they choose to sit down and grow crops in grass country—always the best of the grass country. It was a serious, and very dangerous, conflict 70 or 80 years ago, when fencing meant posts and rails in country that produced no timber; but it can, I gathered, heat the blood still. Not many of the wire fences I saw were what we could call good fences in New Zealand: the posts were light and wide-spaced, the wires usually slack and rusty. But they could hardly have cost a fifth of the expense of fencing in wood. And they don't have to keep out driven stock, which are never seen on the roads.

THE correspondent who told me last year about her twelve-years-old hen and twenty-six-years-old APRIL 5 pregnant pony, wrote again yesterday to say that the hen had died.

She was hatched in September, 1939, so was well into her thirteenth year. She roosted early on Monday night, was not very bright on Tuesday, and on Wednesday sat all day in the warm corner in which we put her and died that night. We buried her in one of my old aprons in a leaf-lined grave. . . . Because she was a Leghorn she never sat, but this spring we put her with 18 perching pullets when we bought them in November, and no hen could have mothered them better. She called them to everything she found, and took them everywhere she went. I don't know whether

that hurried her end or not. Before we put her with the chickens she was remarkable for her cunning in securing the best pieces of food. But running about with the chickens for four months, and surrendering the best food, made her noticeably thinner. I hope it kept her happy.

CONVERSATION at milking time:

"Wouldn't Elsie look funny in a frock?"

"Doesn't everybody look funny in a frock?"

"Do you think so?"

"You would think so too if you still had the eyes the Lord gave you."

"Who gave me my eyes?"

"The Devil."

"I don't follow you."

"You don't want to."

"I hate crazy people."

"So do I. That's why I hate what we have become."

"But we were talking about clothes."

"Unnecessary clothes. The clothes we don't require for warmth. The Devil's clothes."

"Why do you harp on the Devil? Do you think we should go naked?"

"No. But I think we were born naked. I think it was blasphemy to call nakedness unclean. Clothes are unclean—a reminder every time we put them on that we don't believe in God."

"I think it is time to feed the fowls."

(To be continued)

SHORTBREAD FOR THE TROOPS

SOME stay-at-homes may tend to forget, and none of us can be reminded too often, that hostilities are still going on in Korea, and that a large number of New Zealanders are involved in them. Molly McNab, of 3ZB, recently hit on an essentially womanly, and practical, way of reminding listeners of the men overseas and the small pleasures that mean much to them. She arranged a baking contest in an effort to inspire other housewives to patriotic cooking. Shortbread, Miss McNab decided, was a sensible and tasty kind of stuff to give the troops, and on May 1, the 3ZB Women's Hour announcer will preside over the judging of her Shortbread Cooking Contest. Some women may then be surprised at the adeptness of some men at turning out a batch of prize-winning shortbread. It is rumoured that professional chefs are among the entrants, and a trio of 3ZB announcers hope to prove the versatility of the male and, as a side issue, of course, take home the £10 offered in prizes. The value of the contest will, however, be determined by quantity as well as quality, since the principal intention is to provide more food parcels for troops in Korea.



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