

"Ask Me Another"

By NOAH LOTT

Question.—There are spots, six inches to a foot in diameter, on our greens where we have never been able to grow good turf. These spots have been seeded several times but the grass soon turns yellow and dies out. The soil is a heavy clay. What is the remedy?

Answer.—There is probably a chunk of puddled clay, that is, clay which has been worked while too wet, under these spots. Manufacturers use this method to make brick but farmers on clay soils know better than to work their lands when they are wet. Some golf course construction contractors never stop work because of the condition of the soil. The best remedy I have ever used for this condition is to drive fork tines straight down through these spots. Make plenty of holes and fill them with sand. It is better than to patch with a piece of good sod. Seeding can also be done mixed with compost.

Q.—Is muriate of ammonia, mentioned in the last issue of GOLFDOM, a good fertilizer to use on fine turf such as putting greens?

A.—Hardly. Muriate of ammonia, more commonly known as ammonium chloride, makes a good gargle in case of sore throat, an excellent disinfectant for kitchen sinks and lavatories and it causes mercuric chloride to dissolve more readily when making up stock solutions of worm eradicator, but it is too quick on the trigger for safe use on turf. It is likely to cause bad burning. The writer probably confused this with ammonium sulphate.

Q.—Our creeping bent greens were very fine last summer but this spring they are growing coarse in texture. Please give the cause and suggest a treatment to make the grass grow finer in texture.

A.—Over-eating on the part of the grass is the cause. Keep off all commercial fertilizers and rich composts until the trouble is over. The bents grow naturally on poor sour soils and it is a mistake to be continually fertilizing them. If necessary to top-dress the greens in order to make a smooth putting surface use a sandy loam

GOLFDOM has been fortunate in arranging with one of the foremost authorities on golf turf culture and maintenance to conduct its questions and answers feature.

Some of the questions that have been asked of GOLFDOM during the past month are answered in the accompanying paragraphs.

We will welcome questions for answering on this "Ask Me Another" page, so write your problem to us and the expert, who writes under the nom de plume of Noah Lott, will help you with a solution.

soil or sand alone, if the green is built of clay. Where muck or light sandy soils were used in the construction of the greens a top-dressing with considerable clay in it is advisable. Wait until the grass shows that it is suffering from lack of nourishment before dosing it with rich fertilizers.

Q.—How thick should sod be cut for re-laying?

A.—Both the experimental evidence and practical experience agree that the thinner the sod is cut so long as it can be handled without its falling to pieces the better. Sod one inch in thickness will become attached to the soil below much quicker than will sods which are two or three inches thick. Ordinarily about one inch is the right thickness.

Q.—Is ammonium sulphate a fertilizer or just a stimulant?

A.—It is a fertilizer, that is, it furnishes an element, nitrogen, which is absolutely essential to the growth of grass. Nitrogen is not the only thing which is needed. Continued use of ammonium sulphate will finally produce a condition where there is no response on the part of the grass. That is an indication that something else is needed. Ammonium sulphate used with good compost gives the grass a complete diet.