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"THE PROFESSION WHICH I HAVE EMBRACED REQUIRES A KNOWLEDGE OF EVERYTHING."

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The House Fly

Injury Caused by It and Method of Control.

R. FINKLESTEIN, O. A. C., Guelph, Canada.

THE house fly is found wherever man is found, and is, perhaps, the most widely distributed insect known. It is a constant nuisance to man and is, in fact, his worst pest. This is well shown by the following statement by Hewitt, Dominion Entomologist of Canada:—

"Howard, 1911, has calculated that by September 10th the progeny of a single over-wintered fly which deposits its eggs on April 15th, would number 5,598,720,000,000—if they all lived; but they do not all live, nor do all eggs hatch. Nevertheless, these calculations serve a usefulness by indicating in a graphic manner the potential fecundity of a house fly."

The house fly has become such an important factor in the spread of some diseases, particularly typhoid fever, that recommendations have been made by prominent men to change its name to that of "Typhoid Fly."

BREEDING RATE AND PLACES

Some flies hibernate during the winter. They reappear with the warm spring weather. Then a single fly lays one hundred to one hundred and fifty eggs in a batch and as many as four such batches during its life-time. Three weeks after the first batch is deposited, the second generation is in a position to do its bit in laying eggs. Their capacity for reproduction and increase in numbers, therefore, seems remarkable.

Female flies breed in rotting materials and excreta of all kinds. Their eggs have been found in decaying vegetables and fruit; also in human faeces and in manure of the horse, fowl, cow, pig and rabbit, as well as in such materials as kitchen refuse, garbage, cess-pools, etc.

HABITS.

Young flies make their first appearance in the midst of filth and manure. They dirty their mouths and feet in all kinds of filth imaginable. They are great feeders; nothing is too unclean or bad-smelling for them to eat. In hurried feeding flies fill their crop (the storehouse for liquid food) and relieve themselves of it later by partly vomiting it. Many a time these vomitings are again taken up and used as food. When a solid food is met with, flies deposit some liquid on it and then suck it up. Plenty of food causes frequent defecation, especially during the hot weather, and so it is common to find a countless number of faecal deposits and vomit spots in places visited by flies.

FOODS CONTAMINATED

Flies divide their attention between excrements and food materials. When they leave the privy or the manure pile, or refuse of any sort, they may walk over foods and wipe their dirty mouth parts and hairy feet which have been aptly compared to miniature brushes that are hard to clean.