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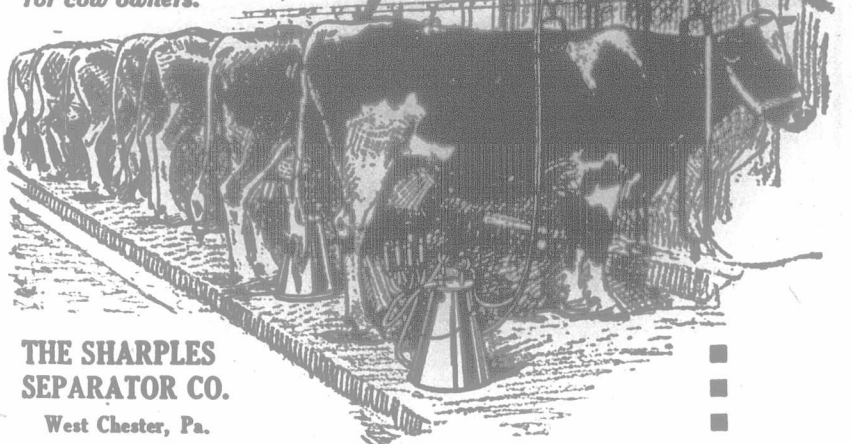
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Poison Ivy.

Quite frequently enquiries come to this office re poison ivy. For the benefit of all our readers, we are publishing an extract on this plant from the Dominion Botanist's report.

It is safe to say that no poisonous plant in America is better known by name than poison ivy. One would consequently expect to find it also one of the most generally known at first hand, of all our plants, but it is astonishing how many people confess themselves unacquainted with it. Not only townfolk, but many farmers, and not a few of those who profess to be interested in natural-history studies, are unable to recognize it. This being the case, it is not so strange that there are many misconceptions abroad as to its nature, and the precautions to be taken against it. This should not be so, as the plant is so plentiful in nearly every part of North America, and especially in the East, that almost everyone must have had an opportunity at one time or another, of meeting with it; and as the danger incurred by many people in coming in contact with it is so great, its recognition should be a matter of importance to all.

Poison ivy differs from the majority of poisonous plants in that it does not require to be eaten in order to produce its ill effects. Mere contact with it is sufficient; and indeed many people declare that they are affected even in its presence, though they do not touch it at all. The possibility of ivy poisoning without contact is not admitted though, by those who have studied the nature of the poison to which its effects are due. This poison has been found to be a non-volatile oil, to which the name "toxicodendrol" has been given. All evidence tends to show that it is a mistake to suppose the poisonous principle can be diffused through the air about the plants. The poisonous substance is found in all parts of the plant, and a very little of it reaching the skin is sufficient to set up its painful irritation. Probably many cases of poisoning which appear to be explainable only on the ground of transmission through the air, might be accounted for by the contact of shoes or clothing with the weed, and then with parts of the body which may not have touched it directly.

It is well known that not all persons are equally susceptible to injury by poison ivy. Some can handle the plant freely without any fear of unpleasant consequences. It would appear also, as if animals were immune, as birds are reported to feed upon the fruit, and cows have been known to eat it and show no evil effects. Poison ivy growing along a fence, was kept almost completely eaten down on the one side, where cattle were being pastured. No effects sufficient to attract notice were suffered by any of the animals.

Poison ivy grows most commonly along the borders of fields and woods, by roadsides, or in open woods; or less frequently it occurs in deep woods where it may become a tall climber supporting itself on the trunks of trees. In the open it is low and bushy, or often climbing or trailing. The leaves are all composed of three ovate, coarsely-toothed leaflets, and serve well as a means of identification. There are no other plants of similar habit in Canada with leaves which would easily be confused with them. The Virginian Creeper is often held in suspicion, quite needlessly though, as it has five, not three, leaflets, which spread from one point like the fingers of the hand. The poison ivy can also be known when in fruit, by its upright axillary panicles of whitish berries of about the size of peas.

Measures of eradication must be directed toward the uprooting of the plants, as otherwise any effort to kill them would have to be repeated and continued as long as the roots retain enough vitality to send up new vegetation. It may be advisable to mow off and remove the stems before starting to grub up the roots, so as to lessen the danger of poisoning while at work. The tops may be got rid of also by spraying with a mixture of one-half pint commercial sulphuric acid in one gallon of water. As sulphuric acid is corrosive, it will be advisable to apply with a sprinkling can or an old sprayer which can be sacrificed to the purpose. Obviously, too, any work among poison ivy should be done by a person who knows that he is not

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