

appreciably. Some twenty years ago, perhaps longer, at Tavares, Fla., a development company undertook to build a winter resort. Tavares was at the time a small municipality with perhaps two or three hundred inhabitants located among the lakes in the southern part of the State.

Among the earlier efforts at developments an opera house was constructed, but owing to the freeze of 1895 it was never completed. The municipality never grew to amount to anything; in fact, I think the number of inhabitants now is what it was about then. The doors and windows of the lower floor of this opera house were securely fastened up to keep intruders out, but the upper windows were only closed by loose boards, which soon dropped out, making it easily accessible to bats. They took advantage of it and in the course of a few years were there in countless thousands. I know of no way of estimating the number, but you may get some idea of it from the fact that the only time I was ever there at the right hour was on a trip to Eustis. The train stopped at Tavares one half-hour before sunset, and remained there something like forty-five minutes. I took advantage of the occasion to see the bats emerge from the building. I had only been watching a few minutes when they began, first a single one, then two or three together, and as if the rustle started them, then they began seriously flying out of the window with incredible swiftness. There must have been at least half a hundred a second. I watched this stream of bats pouring out for half an hour or so, and was told by some of the residents of Tavares that it would continue until something like half an hour after dark, making probably two hours altogether.

It was on this trip, now seven years ago, that I was making some mosquito observations, and I have to confess that I have never seen more mosquitoes in the interior of the State, than I saw at that time.

Some two years ago the opera house in question was cleaned out and converted into a packing house. I have since made inquiry of the citizens in the vicinity of Tavares and Eustis, as to whether they have experienced any appreciable difference in the number of mosquitoes now, and when the bat roost was at its height, and am convinced that the difference, to say the least, is not such as to cause one to notice it.

Again thanking you for your information, I am, very truly and cordially yours,

(Signed)

HIRAM BYRD.