

Agriculture and Colonization.

Croton Bug.—Another troublesome household pest abundant in some places, to which reference might be made, is the Croton bug or small "cockroach." It is a frequenter of many large mills, and is found in hotels which are heated with hot water. It sometimes does harm in eating off the surface of boots and gloves, or anything in which faced leather enters into the manufacture. I saw a pair of boots at an hotel in Brandon, Manitoba, the surface of which had been eaten off in patches, the same as if it had been pared off with a knife. The remedy is powdered borax, which if sprinkled round the edges of the room where the insects generally run, it not only drives them away but kills many outright.

By Mr. Powell :

Q. What is the colour?—A grayish brown or dusty colour.

By Mr. Featherston :

Q. It is the regular cockroach?—A. It is the cockroach of this country. It is not the same as the cockroach which is found in England, and at some of our seaports, which is much larger. Under any circumstances they are nasty things to have about a house. They smell nasty, get into food and destroy many things. Borax has been found to be a successful remedy. Mr. Rosamond, M.P. for North Lanark, had them in his Almonte mills at one time. He wrote to me asking for a remedy and I recommended him to apply borax freely about the floors of the mills. This he has done and reports to me that the insects have quite disappeared. They will probably appear again at some time and will require a second treatment.

By Mr. McGregor :

Q. In Western Ontario we are troubled with an insect which bores the soft maple tree. I got Mr. Craig to look at it when he visited us. This insect is spoiling all our nice shade trees; thousands of them. It is very troublesome and is now affecting the ash?—A. Mr. Craig brought some specimens of the affected bark of the trees to which you refer, with him to Ottawa, but the grubs were all injured. They had become mouldy and I could not learn anything from them. I wrote to Windsor for more but could not get any further specimens. I have no doubt it is one of the borers well-known to attack the maple. Nothing can be done except painting the trees with an alkaline wash to prevent the beetles from laying more eggs next year. The female beetles probably appear in June. If the trees were treated the same as apple trees are for borers, the eggs would not be laid and the injury could not occur. Generally when the holes are observed in the trees it is too late to remedy the evil, because the holes merely show where a fully developed beetle has emerged.

Q. We often find them between the bark and the wood?—A. That is where the chief injury is done.

Q. I suppose dozens of trees in our district have been affected by them?—A. I wrote to a gentleman whose name was given me in Windsor, and asked him particularly for all information possible as to the extent of the injury, but I got no reply.

Q. About a foot in diameter is the size of a 15 or 20 year old tree.—A. There is nothing can be done except painting with an alkaline wash in the spring—the time the beetles occur so as to prevent the females from laying their eggs.

Q. The same wash you spoke of?—A. Yes; soft soap and soda.

Q. We put in a little coal oil?—A. I do not think that would have much effect. If you made any addition at all I think carbolic acid would be better. I say that coal oil would not have much effect for this reason: Where I have tried the ordinary kerosene emulsion for the peach bark-borer it had not the effect of keeping it away. The effect only lasted for a little while, the odour of the coal oil, seemingly, soon disappearing.

Q. I used a syringe to the hole?—A. Where you can find the hole you can get at it in that way. But that hole is merely where one insect has come out, and while you are syringing that, hundreds of other borers may be at work and you could not get at them.