NOXIOUS WEEDS

1. C - 7. G. S.

./ c. 1

BY E. SPRAGGETT, ROAD SUPT., GRAND FORKS DISTRICT

Man in his age-long struggle for supremacy, has waged increasing warfare with Nature in her various manifestations. In the early days of the race we can, in imagination, see primitive man with stone hatchet and club fighting for his life with the great beasts of prey that ranged the earth as yet the undisputed lords of creation. A bunter, was this primitive man; his food the flesh of birds and beasts, of fish and reptiles, with grubs and insects and the fruits and roots that grew wild in the primeval forest.

After untold years of this precarious hand-to-mouth existence, man gradually learned to domesticate the sheep and goat, the horse and ass, the cow and hog. He was now less dependent on Nature (or chance) for the necessities of life, but he was forced to be a wanderer on the face of the globe in order to obtain pasture for his flocks and herds.

Another long stride in advance was made when man proceeded with wondrous care and patience to cuitivate, select and improve various wild grasses, the ancestors of our various grains; and gradually produced the numerous vegetables and fruits so altered in many cases from their original state in Nature as to be in our day hardly recognizable; the wild cabbage with its small head of loose leaves becoming a solid ball a foot or more in diameter; the little wild crab being transformed into our modern apple four or five inches across.

In his struggle for existence, man with his domesticated beasts and his cuitivated crops has vastly increased his advantages in the great contest; but now Nature employs more insidious forces; drouth and flood, wind and hail destroy his crops which at other times are devoured by vast swarms of locusts and grasshoppers. Innumerable microscopic forms of life (moulds, smuts, r. sts, scales) infest his trees and plants and for every seed he sows, Nature sows thousands. By increasing vigilance and endless toli alone can man wrest and hold the earth from jealous Nature. His very efforts to overcome her are made use of by his insidious opponent. The plow turns up innumerable seeds which were too deeply covered to germinate. Pests and weeds accompany every new migration and follow all lines of communication. Man's carelessness in disposing of his waste products is turned against him by Nature, who utilizes his waste piles and refuse heaps for the nurseries of untold billions of bacteria, of house flies, of moths and of pests of every description.

In recent years man is beginning to imitate this insidious wisdom of Dame Nature. The housefly and the grasshopper are being inoculated with deach dealing germs; the mosquito—the immediate cause of Mainria and Yellow Fever—is being exterminated by the destruction of her breeding places; our fruit trees are preserved by spraying; drouth is defied by scientific irrigation and by persistent cultivation.

Now and again new pests appear and often cause great havoc before man discovers how to combat the new enemy. Thus we have new diseases