

Farm and Garden

A bulletin issued by the Ontario Department of Agriculture gives the following information. This is one of the most destructive insects that ever was found in Ontario. Fruit growers and arboriculturists have been much concerned during the past few years as to whether it would reach the Province, and whether, if it should come, it would be able to survive the winter season. It has come and it has survived, and in 1897 it was definitely located in several orchards in the Niagara district, and also in the southwestern district of Ontario. In three or four cases the trees infested are numbered by hundreds. The danger has come upon us with great suddenness. It has escaped observation until it has appeared in such extent as to cause alarm. The Ontario Department of Agriculture has had extensive investigation as to the distribution of the insect, and the Minister submitted a Bill at the recent session of the Legislature which was passed and is now in force. The hearty cooperation of all fruitgrowers is asked in the enforcement of this Act. Legislation as to this scale has been passed in most of the eastern and northern States.

The general consensus of opinion after much investigation is, that it came originally from California, where it was noticed as a pest in the San Jose Valley as far back as 1873. In 1880 Prof. Comstock described it and named the insect Aspidiotus perniciosus, on account of its serious character as a scale. It is believed to have been introduced into the East in 1867 by two New Jersey nurseries, one at Burlington, the other at Little Silver. These firms imported from the San Jose Valley a variety of Japanese plum, the Kelsey, which was claimed to be a scab-proof. In 1880 or 1890 the first scaly stock from this importation began to be distributed, and in August of 1893 the San Jose scale was first observed on the eastern side of the Rocky Mount. It was located in an orchard of Charlottesville, Virginia, and since then each season has extended the list of infested districts.

It possesses marvellous powers of reproduction. A single female that has wintered over may be the progenitor of millions in a single season; some have computed that her progeny may reach the incredible number of 8,000,000,000. There may be four generations in a season, the adult females of each giving birth to living young for five or six weeks, the progeny of these bearing young when about thirty days old. Each female brings into existence 100 to 500 insects during her lifetime. Thus it will be seen that a great confusion of generations will soon exist, as there may be upon a plant at one time the young of several generations. Infested young trees perish in two or three years. The range of food plants is extensive, and all parts of the plant may be attacked—leaf, stem, twig and fruit. The scale has been found upon the peach, pear, plum, apple, cherry, apricot, quince, currant, gooseberry, raspberry, rose hawthorn and even elm. The insect and scale are exceedingly minute. The scale is often much the same color as the bark of the infested tree. Most are less than one-sixteenth of an inch in diameter, and are thus almost invisible to the naked eye. It is readily introduced by nursery stock and fruit from infested trees.

In the work of distribution, the insect itself can do but little, as it is quite helpless to move from place to place. Its life of active movement is very brief—a few hours; at most a day or two. It moves only a few inches from its birthplace, then settles, becomes covered with a scale, and in the case of the female, remains fixed for life, and begins producing young in about thirty days. After becoming fixed, it lives by sucking the sap of the plant upon which it is seated. The males have wings and may fly about at maturity, but the females are always wingless. During the few hours or days the tiny lice are moving about, they may get upon birds and such insects as ants and small beetles, and by them be carried to other trees. One observer has noticed that in infested districts the scale is often more common near a bird's nest. As trees in a nursery grow close together, they present favorable conditions for being infested. Fruit from infested trees may have the scale upon it; even wind may assist in spreading these insects that appear at first so comparatively helpless to travel by their own efforts. Thus birds, insects, fruit, scions from infested trees, infested trees, and wind may all be important factors in the distribution of this scale.

The nearly fully grown insect passes the winter beneath its wax-like scale. About June the young begin to appear, as exceedingly minute, six-legged insects, like yellowish specks, moving about. They creep about only for a few hours, at most a day or two, then settle but a few inches from their birthplace, and become attached to the

spot from which the females never move. During their sedentary life the females lose their feelers and legs, and have neither eyes nor wings. The males, however, have legs, feelers (antennae) eyes and wings in the adult condition. The scale of the female is circular, with a small nipple in the centre. This scale is from a twelfth to one twentieth of an inch in diameter, and may be of a light or dark grey color, and usually is much the same color as the bark; the nipple in the centre may be a pale yellow or blackish color. The scale of the male is elongated, with the nipple near one end, and is thus readily distinguished from that of the female. The female brings forth living young, and does not lay eggs, as is usually the case with scale insects, such as the oyster shell and scurfy scales. She may bring into life from 100 to 500 young during the six weeks of her existence after reaching the adult stage. The males develop about a week sooner than the females, the latter taking about five weeks, and emerge from their scales as exceedingly minute two-winged, fly-like insects. From June, when the young appear, a constant succession of generations is observed.

The scale of these insects is formed from a waxy secretion which commences soon after they come into existence, and forms a protective covering as development proceeds. In the earlier stages of growth the scale presents a somewhat greyish-yellow color, and gets more bronzed later. The general appearance on twigs is that of a greyish, slightly roughened scurfy deposit. This hides the natural reddish color of the young limbs of the peach, pear and apple. They sometimes even look as if sprinkled with ashes. If the scales are crushed, a yellowish oily liquid will appear from the crushed soft yellow insects beneath the scales. Examined in summer many show orange-colored larvae, snowy-white young scales, mingled with old brown or blackened matured scales. This insect produces a peculiar reddening effect upon the skin of the fruit and of tender twigs. An encircling band of reddish discoloration around the margin of each female scale is very marked on the fruit. The larva of the cambium layer of young twigs where scales are massed is usually stained deep red or purplish. Where the scales are few the purplish ring surrounding each is quite distinguishable.

It is certain that the scale was introduced on infested nursery stock. The same danger is to be feared again. Every person who buys stock should have it perfectly examined before setting it out. The examination should be thorough, as the scales are minute and are easily overlooked. There is one method of treating stock that is sure to destroy all kinds of insect life, but it is applicable only in nurseries and not by the farmer or fruit grower—i. e. the treatment with hydrocyanic acid gas. Nurserymen will do well to consider the advisability of treating all stock handled by them in this way. We give the following for their benefit:

When the trees are at all badly infested there is only one treatment to be recommended with safety, and that is to root up the trees and burn them at once. Even when only slightly infested the work of washing and spraying may not be done thoroughly enough to destroy every scale, and as the insect multiplies so rapidly the greatest care must be taken not to allow even one scale to remain. The advice given is to thoroughly destroy all stock and all trees found to be infested. During the winter and early spring, before the insects appear, some may desire to treat the trees before the inspector arrives to destroy under the Act. In that case the two remedies or methods are with soap wash and with kerosene. Soap Washes.—The soap wash should be made by dissolving two pounds of fish-oil soap or so-called "white-oil soap" in one gallon of water. It is absolutely necessary that a hot soap be used, as cold soaps cannot be kept in solution at this strength, and are not so efficient as the former. The manufacturer should be required to guarantee his soap to meet the requirements as to strength and solubility. This wash should be used warm, if possible, and preferably on a warm day. Kerosene.—If old orchard trees are infested, the probability of clearing out the pest is not at all promising. But if the trees are valuable, and have not been seriously injured, the attempt is worth while. They should first be judiciously pruned, but large wounds avoided; the trunk and branches should be cleared of rough bark, and especially the sprouts and any trash removed from around the base of the tree. Then for all orchard fruits, except peach and cherry, spray with pure kerosene, using great care to only moisten the bark. The tree must be washed, every twig and branch, but not to put on enough oil to run down the stem and collect about the base. If a band of any sort is placed about the tree, or if oil collects about the base of the trunk damage is certain to result. When kerosene is used it should be purchased by the barrel, and of a grade not lower than 120 flash test. Low grades are more dangerous to plants than high grades. Forty

gallons of kerosene will spray three hundred to four hundred trees, depending on size, and ought not to cost over ten cents a gallon in barrel quantities. This does not make it very expensive treatment. It should always be used on a bright, warm day, when the plants are dry, and just as little applied as can be made to wet properly every part of the plant.

There are two enemies to the scale among insects, both of which are reported to aid very materially in keeping the scale in check. One, the "Two-spotted Ladybird" (Chilocorus caryocera), is very common on infested trees, apparently feeding upon the scale, the other is a chalcid parasite (Aphidius fuscipennis).

FIRESIDE FUN.

"Why do you lean over the empty cask?" "I am mourning over departed spirits."

What English River has the most crooked course? The Trent for miles of its course it is altogether in Noths.

He-jack. "I hear that you are building a new house?" "Tomdick. "Yes; I couldn't very well build an old one, you know."

"Say, masea, where did de Mexicans suffer de most?" "Why, in de feet (defeat), to be sure. What you ask such silly questions for?"

"Would you take me for twenty?" said a young lady, who looked much younger. "Bless you, my child," said an admiring bachelor, "I would take you for life."

Office Boy: "Please, sir, I've a complaint to make. The book-keeper kicked me." "Boss: "Of course he kicked you. You don't expect me to attend to everything, do you?"

He (disagreeable): "What the mischief is the matter with this dinner?" "She (mildly): "I cooked it, dear."

He: "Well, I was wondering what made it so much better than usual."

Mamma: "Ethel, what do you mean by shouting in that disgraceful fashion? See how quiet Willie is."

"Of course he's quiet; that's our game. He's papa coming home late, and I'm up."

"What sent that dog away howling so?" asked the opossum. "Oh," said the porcupine, "he was looking round for information, and I kindly supplied him with a few points, that is all."

Little Dick: "Papa, didn't you tell mamma we must economize?" "Papa: "I did, my son." Little Dick: "Well, I was thinking that if you'd get me a pony I wouldn't wear out so many shoes."

First Baby: "I shouldn't like to be a baby up in the Arctic regions." Second Baby: "Why not?" First Baby: "The nights are six months long there, and I don't believe I could cry for so long without stopping."

Teacher: "Now, leather comes from the cow, and wool from the sheep, and wool is made into cloth, and cloth into coats. Now, what is your coat made of—yours, Tommy?" Tommy (with hesitation): "Out of feathers."

A gentleman met a half-witted lad in the road, and, placing in one of his hands a sixpence and a penny, asked him which of the two he would choose. The lad replied that he would not be greedy he'd keep the littlest."

"The Dear Child: "Oh, Mrs. Brown, when did you get back?" Mrs. Brown: "Bless you, dear, I was not away anywhere. What made you think so?" The Dear Child: "I heard my mamma say that you were at Loggerheads with your husband for over a week."

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