

in much the same manner as the rootlets of the common green-leaved plants draw their nutriment from the soil. When this union is effected the dodder plant disconnects itself from the earth but still continues to grow very rapidly, even more rapidly than the clover, and as this is always at the expense of the host the clover is soon killed. These leafless stems produce densely clustered white or pink flowers which are succeeded by rounded seed pods, each cluster producing about sixty seeds.

As to method of eradication, when small dodder-infested spots are first indicated by the tangle of yellowish or reddish stems referred to above, they should be mowed as closely as possible with a scythe several feet beyond where the yellow vines are observed. These spots should then be spaded, as the small clusters of flowers that produce nearly all the seed are near the root of the clover stem and will often remain in the stubble after the alfalfa has been cut and then ripen their seed. Where a field has become badly infested cultivation with hoed crops, such as roots or corn, for two successive seasons is usually successful, but rotation should be modified so as to leave out leguminous plants until the vitality of all seed remaining in the soil has been destroyed. These seeds will retain their vitality in the soil for five years or longer under favorable conditions.

•**ERGOT (*Claviceps purpurea*).** This is a parasite which attacks grasses and cereal grains. In the heads of timothy, meadow fescue, wheat, or rye, may be noted dark purple-colored bodies known as ergots occupying the place of some of the grains. They often stand out in a conspicuous manner in rye and many of the larger grasses, while in wheat and some of the smaller grasses they are not larger than the grains which they displace. Ergot contains poisonous compounds, and bread made from flour obtained from ergotted samples of wheat and rye has led to dangerous illness in human beings. This is, however, of rare occurrence. Abortion among cattle has been attributed to the consumption of ergotted grasses. If fed in considerable quantities, it will produce serious poisonous effects, but experiments indicate that there is little ground for the supposition that it will cause abortion.

It spreads by spores which when first formed contain a sweet secretion that is attractive to insects. This aids in their dissemination.

Meadows affected with ergot should be cut when the grasses are in bloom, before the fungus has had time to mature. Small patches of grasses in pastures are often much infested with ergot, in such cases they should be cut and burned. Couch or twitch grass is specially susceptible to this fungus.

Samples of cereal grains or grass seeds containing ergots should not be sown.

•**FALSE FLAX (*Camelina sativa*).** This plant is a member of the mustard family and doubtless came to this country in imported flax seed. It resembles flax somewhat but has much smaller flowers and seeds, and its seed capsules, or pods, are pear-shaped instead of spherical, with a small projection from the upper end. It is an annual and winter-annual, growing from a foot to two feet high. It usually has branching stems, and narrow, arrow-shaped leaves. The flowers are numerous, yellow and somewhat inconspicuous.

The seed occurs as an impurity in flax and clover seed, and in some of the grass seeds, especially Timothy.

The fact that this plant ripens some of its pods early in the season and long before crops are ripe, renders it a difficult pest to overcome. Hoed crops may, however, be employed to the best advantage, as the cultivation given to these crops will induce the false-flax seed to germinate and thus clear the land.

Hand pulling is advisable when the weed is not too thick, and cutting down the whole crop before the seeds mature if the seed has been unwittingly intro-

• Specified in Seed Control Act.