

GIRDLED TREES—CATERPILLARS ON APPLE TREES, &c.

MESSRS. TUCKER & SON,—I observe in the *Country Gentleman* of June 5, an article from a gentleman who has lost several thousand trees by mice the last winter, and I see by the papers from different parts of the country, that immense damage has been done to fruit trees by mice. They were uncommonly plenty in this part of the country last winter, and have done much damage, where proper means to prevent has been neglected. For the benefit of the public, I will mention a preventive which I have used for a number of years, with good success. Take one gallon soft soap, one pound Scotch snuff, one pound sulphur, one tea-cupful of newly slacked lime, (the lime is used to make the others stick.)

Put the above in a kettle and make it scalding hot; stir it well to have it properly mixed, and if too stiff, add a little water, so that it may be applied to the trees by a large paint brush; one partly worn is best. It must not be made too thin, but so that considerable of the snuff, &c., shall stick to the tree. The time to put it on is before the snow falls. Before putting it on, clear away all the grass and rubbish around the trees, quite to the ground; then put on the above composition a little warm, all around, from the ground three feet high, and if any roots are bare apply to them also.

If any of the quite young trees or grafts near the ground, the bark of which should be quite smooth, so that the composition would be liable to be washed off by rain, in that case, dip a strip of cotton in the composition, and wind around. This is the best remedy against mice I have ever tried, and it is effectual against rabbits or goats; nothing loves snuff but foolish men and women. I have known a number who have lost their lives by the use of it.

While writing about mice I will mention a mode I have tried many years, to prevent them from destroying grain in the barn. Take the leaves of stinking elder and scatter between each layer of grain; one bushel of leaves will be sufficient to spread on a layer thirty feet square. Perhaps sweet elder leaves would answer as well, but I never tried them. To prove the efficacy of the leaves, I will state, having my barn well filled with grain on both sides of the floor, and leaves on the whole, except perhaps half a load on the scaffold over the floor, on which we had pitched, to throw it higher; there might be five or six bushels of grain, wheat and oats scattered. This was all cut to pieces, while not a peck of grain was lost in all the other parts of the barn. The labor of gathering the leaves and putting on is but a trifle.

I also observe in the same number of your paper, one of your correspondents from Connecticut, shows the great importance of destroying the worms on apple trees, and his method of doing it. I agree with him that fruit trees should be kept clear of worms or they will soon spoil them; but his method of burning them off is all wrong; it is expensive, takes much time, and the limb is killed by the blaze. I have tried burning, shooting with powder, oil and other ways; but my practice for many years has been with very strong soap suds, which is cheaper, done much easier, quicker, and is more effectual. Take about one quart of soft soap, put it in near a pailful of hot soft water; stir and fit for use. Take a light pole long enough to reach the worms on the tree. Tie on the end a piece of thick cloth with a strong twine around the pole; let a part of the cloth project over the end of the pole a few inches. Then dip the swab in the soap suds, and wipe off the nest or bunch of worms; if they have got considerably grown wet the nest with the swab before wiping it off, otherwise many of the worms will fall and again crawl up to the tree; but if they are touched by the soap suds it kills them almost instantly, as sure as fire. As soon as they appear on the trees they should be destroyed; the trees need to be examined frequently until the worm winds up, as some hatch later than others, and one kind make no webs, but stick on the large limbs or the body of the tree in bunches, and move on the tree from east to south and west with the sun. These are hatched later than those that make nests or webs. Apply the swab to these carefully, beginning at the bottom of the worms, for if they are disturbed before being wet with the suds, they will instantly spin down and escape. If the worms are killed every year in the orchard and neighboring orchards, and from wild cherry trees, of which they are more fond than apple trees, few will be left to turn to millers to lay eggs for the next year's brood. But where neglected they soon increase so as in some instances to make a whole orchard as bare of leaves as in winter; in that case, there will be no fruit, and the trees will soon die.

JOHN T. ADDAMS, *Plattsburgh, N. Y.*