

THE PEST PROBLEM

Scientific and Practical Solution of the Question.

OF INTEREST TO FARMERS

A Sensible Treatise on the Practical, Effective and Safe Use of a Poison, the Result of Careful Research.

It is difficult for one who is not closely in touch with the agricultural conditions in our Western States to realize the tremendous amount of damage which is done by such little animals as field mice, prairie dogs, ground squirrels, pocket gophers, and other rodent pests. Yet it has been one of the most serious and most difficult problems that farmers have had to solve, and the Department of Agriculture, with its hundreds of experts, has been trying to devise some plan by which the rodents could be killed off. Private individuals, with thought of the wealth which would be theirs if they could work out some scheme which would exterminate rodents, have put their wits to work, and attempted to solve the problem. Farmers' organizations have tried every plan suggested to them, but have found them impractical or unsatisfactory. The little animals have been protected by old Mother Nature, who has endowed them with extraordinary keen instinct, and so far it has been the farmers who have lost in the battle for supremacy.

Entire Crops Have Been Ruined.

The pest problem is a growing problem. They are continually growing, multiplying. Where there were millions of the rodents a few years ago, there are hundreds of millions now. The rich productive fields of our fertile western states offer them an ideal home. Plenty of food, with a great variety, is always at hand, and they are thriving on the "fat of the land." Sometimes as much as three-fourths of a crop has been destroyed by gophers, while in a few instances, the entire crop has been ruined in a very short time by swarms of the rodents.

The Entire West is Infected.

Different sections are infested with different pests. In the Southwestern part of the United States prairie dogs work untold damage to the growing crops. By instinct, the prairie dog is a social animal, always living in colonies which vary in extent from a few acres to hundreds of square miles.

New Mexico, part of Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma, Arizona, Utah and Texas are literally alive with prairie dogs. Thirty-two of these little animals will eat as much grass as one sheep, so it can easily be figured how much damage they will do in one season. Estimates show that the grass consumed in Texas alone would support over 1,563,000 head of cattle, while from one-half to three-quarters of the crops are destroyed by these rodents. Is it any wonder Mr. Farmer has been trying to find some method of ridding his lands of these pests?

Losses by Gophers Are Enormous.

Pocket gophers work farther north than prairie dogs, but like them, they are fast workers, and great eaters. Like the busy little bee, they are seldom quiet, and have a keen instinct which warns them instantly of danger, making their extermination extremely difficult. Not only are they ravenous eaters, but by burrowing under the ground, they destroy even more than

they eat. Meadows, pastures, and corn-fields are thrown up by their burrowing, and much of the farmer's hard work is lost. Great damage is done to farm machinery by the stones and pebbles found in the mounds, and orchards are often destroyed.

Subonic Plague Danger.

In California, Washington and Oregon, ground squirrels are especially troublesome, and inflict a loss of millions of dollars. Squirrels are very hard to poison, for their appetite is changeable, and bait must be carefully prepared to allay their suspicions. It must also be pleasing to their palate, or they will pass it by in their search for food. For this reason, the poisoning of ground squirrels needs careful study, and must be scientifically treated. It has recently been found that the squirrels in California are the means of carrying plague infection, and hence their immediate extermination is demanded for sanitary reasons.

Farmers Have Tried Everything.

How have the farmers been fighting the rodents? Well, they have tried every plan recommended, for you know the drowning man will always grasp at a straw. Trapping has been tried, but owing to the great amount of work necessary to attend to the traps it has not been successful. Farmers have offered bounties for the bodies of dead rodents. Children have made pastime profitable by shooting the pests, and still they have increased so rapidly that farmers have become discouraged. Poisoning is acknowledged by all to be the most effective means of killing them off, but even this plan has not worked out as well as might be expected.

Waste Using Poison is Enormous.

Of all the poisons used, strychnine has been tested and found to possess more advantages than any other. It is a most deadly poison, acting surely and quickly. While it has a very bitter taste, yet rodents reject bait containing it less often than they do bait

containing other poisons. But this poison has not been used to the best possible advantage by farmers.

Many will not use it at all, owing to their fear that some member of the family might come in contact with the poison. When it is used it has been necessary to prepare it in a hit-or-miss manner, mixing directions often being so faulty that most of the poison is wasted. In fact, the Year Book of the Department of Agriculture, 1908, states that fully one-half the strychnine used in the United States is wasted. This is a very conservative estimate, probably three-fourths being nearer the right amount.

Not only has there been a waste in mixing the poison, but after the grain is prepared, and put out, it very soon loses its poisoning qualities, particularly if the ground is damp or the weather rainy, for the poison is easily dissolved and is washed out of the grain.

The New Discovery.

It has remained for a Chicago chemist, Mr. F. A. Bolduan, of Chicago, Ill., to come to the rescue of the farmers in solving this Pest Problem. A process has been perfected which overcomes all the disadvantages of the use of strychnine. This process is patented in the United States and Canada.

One wonders why some one did not think of it long ago. But that is the case with all great inventions. The greater they are, the simpler they are. And in the simplicity of this process lies one of its great advantages. It does the work far better than old-time methods, and yet does not cost so much. Its universal adoption will bring about the complete extermination of rodents in a comparatively short time. Realizing the danger connected with mixing the poison, this process is being introduced in drug stores where a Mixing Machine does the mixing so thoroughly that every kernel of grain contains a certain known amount of poison. These machines are a simplified form of the machines which are used in every pharmaceutical laboratory for making pills or tablets. The farmer brings his grain into the station and has it poisoned 100 per cent right. The poison is "set" in the grain, just as dye is set in a fabric, so it will not be washed out by rain, or lose its value when put out on damp ground.

Losses Are Cut Out.

All the loss, all the guess work, all the danger of the old plan of each farmer mixing his own bait with a wooden stick or paddle is done away with. This work is all done at the station, far more thoroughly than it has ever been done before. No danger of some of the kernels being well poisoned, while other contain only a trace of the poison. All is mixed alike, and the strychnine is set so that it will hold its value for weeks, even in rainy weather. This has not been the case in the past. Farmers have lost thousands of dollars by the poison being washed out of the grain shortly after being put out.

Strychnine, sweetened and scented, so the rodents will be actually lured to the bait is used in this new process. This overcomes another disadvantage of the old-time method, for sometimes rodents have rejected bait containing strychnine on account of its bitter taste, but the New Process Strychnine is scented with oils which rodents are very fond of.

The Pest Problem is a Serious One.

Haphazard methods have been tried and found wanting and the time has now come when the extermination of the rodents is an absolutely live issue—a problem which must be solved—a condition that must be changed. This can be done only by close co-operation

and wise expenditure of time and money, using only the right methods, so that full value will be received for every cent expended.

The originator of this new process has published a very interesting book entitled "Pests and Profits," which deals with all phases of the pest problem.

Co-Operation Will Bring Results.

The Bureau of Biological Survey of the United States Government recommends that 12½ cents to 15 cents per acre should be spent for poison grain on any field that is badly infested with gophers or ground squirrels. This should be spent at the beginning of the season just when the pests appear, when they are hungry and will eat anything.

Non-resident land-owners ought to be compelled to do their share towards exterminating gophers, prairie dogs, etc., for as long as unoccupied lands are allowed to remain as breeding places they will continue to multiply. These little animals multiply so rapidly that only complete extermination will remove the danger and it is time and money wasted to a certain extent, to neglect to put bait out on vacant fields.

The agricultural interests everywhere are appreciating this new poison system. The farmer can take his wheat, oats or alfalfa, or any other edible product to the mixing station and have it mixed up according to this patented process. It relieves him of all the worry and care. Hereafter he will have no poison utensils around. He is forever relieved of the dangerous task of handling the poison and above all is sure to receive his wheat, alfalfa or oats thoroughly poisoned at a cost cheaper than they have ever had to be before.

The policy is to cater to the likes and dislikes of these little animals. Give them what they want to eat and results are sure to follow.

It will pay every farmer to investigate this latest development of the pest problem, for it is a subject which touches the pocketbook of every Western landowner. He should arouse his neighbors to the importance of all acting together in the great warfare, whose battle cry is "The rodents must go."

In Toyland.

The paper doll loved the china doll. "Will you be my wife?" said he. "Not in a hundred years," she replied. "You were not cut out for me." —Chicago News.

Farmyard Frivolity.

The Hen Chicken—Doesn't this new hat hide my frozen comb nicely? Chanticleer—How did it get frozen? The Hen Chicken—I was born that way—hatched from a cold storage egg. —Pittsburg Press.

It Would Seem So.

The short man ought to do more work than the tallest man can do it. For the economic reason that He's so much nearer to it. —Browning's Magazine.

Takes His Medicine.

Tommy's Mother—Why aren't you a good boy like Willie B Jones? Tommy—Huh! It's easy enough for him to be good; he's sick most of the time. —Philadelphia Record.

Chops!

If every Harry of today. A little lamb had, say, what An asset would be hers, or pay With beef so costly! Hey, what? —Boston Herald.

The Real Way.

"I shall tell my daughter that if she persists in marrying Jones I'll not leave her a cent." "It'll do more good to tell that to Jones." —Cleveland Leader.

Modern Methods.

The saying "take my pen in hand" Was once the thing, you see, But now each man of business takes His typist on his knee. —Princeton Tiger.

Long, Sharp Spikes Not Needed.

Billy Hamilton, one of the greatest stealers that ever wore a spiked shoe, claims that long, sharp spikes are a needless menace. Hamilton never wore anything but short, dull ones, and he was the most dreaded base-runner of his time.

BASEBALL TIPS

Miller Huggins, formerly of the Reds, is showing his 1907 form about second base for the St. Louis Nationals.

Larry Lajoie of the Cleveland Americans is proving to be an excellent first baseman. The position is new to the clever and hard hitting player.

The Chicago club's new catcher, Leslie Nunamaker, did great work for Lincoln last year and was one of the leading catchers of the Western league. Manager Jennings of Detroit has about decided to carry ten pitchers. They are Mullin, Donovan, Summers, Willett, Lelivelt, Workis, Killian, Perron, Browning and Stroud.

The effect of a two years' course in the Clarke school of baseball is shown in the case of Owen Wilson, the Pirates' right fielder, who has developed from a raw "bush leaguer" into a finished artist.

It is rumored that Fred Tenney, the New York Nationals' first baseman, will soon retire from the game to become a baseball reporter. In that event Merkle will be the regular initial first sacker.

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