

PARASITES.

Important Paper from the Board of Horticulture.

Internal Enemies of the Yellow Scale Discovered in the San Gabriel Valley—Recommendations and Notes.

From B. M. LeLong, Secretary of the State Board of Horticulture, we have the following important paper, submitted to the Board by Alexander Crow, Quarantine Officer and ex officio Entomologist: In the year 1872, an extensive orange-grove in the San Gabriel Valley, purchased several small orange trees at a San Francisco tree depot, and planted them in his grove with the intention of budding from them, if the varieties proved desirable, as previous to that most of the citrus trees in California were grown from seed and allowed to bear fruit as seedlings. The trees were found to be infested with a scale insect of a species of Aspidiotus, which spread to the adjoining orange trees, and their presence was detected by the mottled, sickly appearance of the leaves and fruit. A remedy was immediately made to check its spread, and, if possible, stamp it out, and the trees in the infested portion of the grove were cut back, the branches burned, and the trunk and limbs scrubbed; but after all this heroic treatment enough scales escaped to infest the district.

To distinguish it from the "brown scale," Lecanum leucostictum, and the "black scale," L. oleae (the only scales that were then attracting attention in the State), it was named the "red scale," from its reddish-yellow shell, and was considered identical with the red scale of Australia, Aspidiotus aurantii, Maskell; but quite recently several specimens have been observed that prove it distinct, and it is now known as the "yellow scale," Aspidiotus citrinus, Comstock. Various solutions were sprayed on the trees; sulphur and other substances were inserted into the bark, and the small roots were severed, and the trunk and limbs to the trunk were placed containing chemicals of various kinds, in the hope that the roots would take the chemicals up and destroy the scales; but in great many instances the trees were destroyed instead, and others injured and made unproductive by reason of the caustic or greasy properties of the materials then used. In the meantime the scale was slowly but surely spreading, until it is found in nearly all the orange-growing sections of the valley, and adjoining foothills.

In the spring of 1889, Mr. Cogswell, of the Sierra Madre Villa, informed me that the scales were not so numerous in his grove as they had been. He brought me branches infested with yellow scales, from which I hatched a number of very small chieftain flies; this parasite, however, had been discovered by Professor D. W. Coquillett two years previous, in the extensive groves of A. E. & S. Chapman; but as the improvement in the condition of the trees was more noticeable in the Cogswell grove, I am of the opinion that they spread to the latter from the Chapman and other orchards.

Various theories have been advanced for the disappearance of the yellow scale in that section of the valley, but the excessive rainfall of the winter of 1889-90. But this theory can easily be exploded by the fact that we have had very heavy rains in previous winters, and no improvement was noticeable and commented upon previous to the winter of 1888-9. If the theory of the destruction of the scales, why is it that the decrease is not all over the infested section? I find that where the parasite has been recently found, or where it has been unable to find them at all, the yellow scales are as numerous as before. I have recently hatched them by the hundred from scales taken from a tree taken from an orchard wherein a little over a year ago the parasite was not known to exist. The presence of such numbers of parasite insects and eggs, and which are so minute as hardly to be detected with the naked eye—should be sufficient to convince even the most skeptical that the scales are succumbing to "nature's remedy."

The fact that the scales appeared to be on the increase last year, can be accounted for. That is the time when our scale pests have every season shown the most increase, and that this was noticeable in the orchards where the parasite was first found. In computing the period of cultivation on claims already accruing it is provided that the time shall run from the date of the preparation of land and the planting of trees will be construed as acts of cultivation.

The bill agreed upon will change the general land system of the Government. The bill first repeals the Timber Culture Act, but with a reservation in favor of the present law, inasmuch as the act generally have practically reached an agreement on an entirely new bill, which will be brought forward at the first opportunity.

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effort be made to colonize this parasite upon the true red scale, Aspidiotus aurantii; but in a recent visit to the Villa Grove I had conclusive proof that this will be impracticable, or at least of practical benefit. Mr. Cogswell called my attention to a different scale he had noticed upon a lime tree near the hotel. This proved to be a coccinellid, and I advised the destruction of the infested trees, as this scale would be a more serious pest to contend with; for nothing but fumigation with hydrocyanic acid gas has been of any avail against it. I cannot account for its appearance there unless it has been taken upon an orange by a visitor to the hotel and the infested tree thrown under or onto the lime tree.

HOW TO COLONIZE THE PARASITE.

The colonization of this parasite will not be as satisfactory to the orange-growers as was that of the Vedalia coccinellid, because we cannot see the larvae pick off the scale and devour it; however, if they are introduced in an orange grove infested with yellow scale, they will certainly be certain even if not immediately observable, as was the case with the Vedalia. Branches should be obtained with scales infested from an orchard known to contain parasites in numbers. This can be ascertained by placing a few infested leaves in a white paper box, closely covered with tightly with cover, and after a few days the box and leaves should be examined with a magnifying glass—this is really necessary, for even with the best of eyesight the scales are very small, and they are so very minute—if numbers are found, branches should be taken, and placed in boxes containing wet sand or soil, and kept in a cool place, fresh and allow the parasites to develop and hatch. As the branches dry they will be preserved, and the operation repeated. The boxes should be placed under the trees in the shade, or be secured in the branches, and so located in the grove that the prevailing summer winds may aid materially in their distribution.

GOLDEN CHALCID.

New species. (Unnamed.) This new parasite is also working on the yellow scale, and is indeed very promising. It was first observed in Duarte; but recently I received numerous specimens from an orchard near the Stanislaus tract, San Gabriel, also from an orchard in Alhambra. It is very interesting to know that from the infested branches received from the orchards near the Stanislaus tract, Coccophagus citrinus were hatched, showing that this newer species is working on the yellow scale, and not on the other. This parasite is much larger than the other, and of a bright golden-yellow color.

NOTES.

Some of the internal parasites have, like the scales they attack, but one generation each year. This is the case with the caustic or greasy properties of the materials then used. In the meantime the scale was slowly but surely spreading, until it is found in nearly all the orange-growing sections of the valley, and adjoining foothills.

TIMBER CULTURE LAW.

New Bill Agreed Upon by the Conference Committee. WASHINGTON, Feb. 27.—The conferees on the bill for the repeal of the timber culture law and amendatory land laws generally have practically reached an agreement on an entirely new bill, which will be brought forward at the first opportunity.

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The amendment was amended to provide that clerical clerks shall be appointed by the President, under the civil service law, and as amended was passed. It increases the pay of the Secretary from \$1,000 to \$2,000; of the assistant Secretary from \$800 to \$1,000; of the clerks from \$500 to \$600; and of the messengers from \$300 to \$400.

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On motion of Sherman, a new section was inserted changing the act of May 1882, so as to authorize the Superintendent of the Mint at San Francisco to issue New York, with the approval of the Secretary of the Treasury (but not otherwise) to issue United States gold coin from any holder of mining reservations of less than \$5,000, and delivering in exchange therefor gold bars of equal value, to be stamped and assayed at the cost of manufacturing the bars.

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The pure gold bill was then taken up and became the subject of a long debate. The Senate then went into executive session, after which Daves asked unanimous consent to the taking up of the Indian question, which was granted.

Vance objected, and Daves then moved to take up the Indian bill.

The motion was agreed to, thus displacing the bill on the calendar. Daves was pressing an opinion that it was a gross injustice.

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Among the bills passed were the following: Amending the act of various Acts relative to immigration, etc.; and the act of March 2, 1889, for the relief of certain volunteer and regular soldiers of the late war, by the provisions of the Bowman act.

Cockrell moved an additional amendment to the bill, inserting items of \$174,000 for the Chicago and North Western building iron steamer. This was agreed to, after a long discussion, in the course of which Plumb said that the act of Congress passed in 1882, in its present condition of pending judgments against the Government, the Government would have to go into bankruptcy.

The Senate at 6 o'clock began to consider the Indian appropriation bill.

The provision for the purchase of irrigating machinery in Arizona and Nevada was agreed to, by a vote of 67 yeas and 19 nays.

The appropriation for the support of Indian schools was increased from \$800,000 to \$1,000,000.

On motion of Daves the committee amendments reducing the rate of interest for the support of Indian pupils from \$10 to \$150 was disagreed to. Daves explained that the committee had changed its views.

Plumb offered an amendment declaring all lands in Oklahoma agricultural lands, and that proof of the nominal character shall not be required as conditions precedent to final entry. Agreed to.

The rate of interest to be paid the Sisseton and Wahpeton bands was increased from 3 to 4 per cent.

A proposition by Pettigrew to reduce the settlement price of the Sisseton and Wahpeton lands to \$1.25 per acre instead of \$2.50, as proposed in the substitute, was discussed at length, and finally it was arranged that the substitute should be agreed to.

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