

### Alleged Boll Weevil Killers

Many Impracticable Methods Have Been Suggested in South-West Extirminating the Boll Weevil, But None of Them Is Worth Shucks, Says Hollomon.

James A. Hollomon, who was sent to the Southwestern part of the country by the Atlanta Constitution to find out how the cotton farmers there conquered the boll weevil, wrote among many other articles one on the numerous utterly impracticable schemes which were advanced in connection with the job of killing or driving out the cotton pest. Describing the various remedies and devices, he wrote:

There was manufactured and sold in the southwest a mechanical "agitator"—a revolving contraption that was supposed to shake all of the weevils from the cotton plants. Suppose it did! As soon as the "agitator" stopped agitating they flew back upon the plants. The habit of the weevil is to pin his wings to his side, so that he cannot drop to the ground in any way at the slightest noise or commotion in his vicinity. But that is the cunningness of the devil. He goes back when the noise is over.

Anyway the "agitators" were soon found to "agitate" the cotton plant to such an extent that squares, bolls, blooms and pretty nearly everything else except the stalk were agitated upon the ground. Poor, misguided fools who fell for it!

The next man wrote about like this: "Why does the United States department of agriculture waste thousands of dollars a year trying to find ways of poisoning the boll weevil when nature has provided an enemy, the water newt, that will clear the fields of the pest in short order? The newt is known to be a destroyer of aquatic insects. It would be equally effective against other forms of insects, and it would not be difficult to develop the water newt into a land animal, as it already has a pair of partially developed legs. All that remains to be done is to accelerate the development of enough legs that the newt can run about the cotton fields, climb the stalks and pull down the destructive weevil."

It might be possible to develop the newt's legs to such an extent that he could walk on them—at the end of about ten million years. But they say that the great discoverer has overlooked the fact that the average southern farmer, already a little impatient about the boll weevil, would hardly be willing to wait that long for a remedy, even if it were certain that the newt would catch boll weevils at the end of ten million years of training. More bunk! Of course.

**Powdered Gasoline.** Some of the remedies proposed do not involve such stupendous biological problems, but many of them run foul of other branches of science. A man wrote Dr. Coad, of Tallulah, La., that tinkering with calcium arsenate is foolishness—"do it with gasoline," he said. "I know you can't apply gasoline in the liquid form," he wrote, "but you could boil the liquid out of it and apply it as a dust, the same way that you do the calcium arsenate."

"I'll try that," said the chemist of the staff, "the very day that I get read out to evaporate the whole blamed outfit into ghosts."

Of course he will not try that one, but the laboratory, I am informed, has tested out any number of proposals that were equally grotesque. When anybody says that he has discovered something that will control the boll weevil, his plan gets a thorough, scientifically conducted test by the government—unless, of course, it is either dangerous or plainly silly. The laboratory staff is interested in boll weevil-control and has worked out an effective control agent in powdered calcium arsenate.

Some really "beautiful" schemes simply cannot be tried. For instance, there is one that bobs up every once in a while from some new place and it never has been tried yet. It is that soapuds be smeared so slippery that the weevils cannot climb them. Every cotton planter would be delighted to see Mr. Weevil letting his foot slip in soapuds and breaking his neck—but it is a practical impossibility to take a bucket of soapuds and a paint brush and fix up a cotton field with it. Idiotic!

Another and somewhat similar scheme that is proposed just about as often as the soapuds is that some sticky substance, like "tangle-foot" be painted on the plants. Still another of the same kind is that borax or something of that kind be sprinkled on the plants, the idea being that it will "ball up" the weevil's feet till they cannot walk.

All of these belong to a class of "remedies" whose proponents blandly ignore the effect of the stuff on the plants, the practicability of getting it on the plant at all and the possibility of getting it in contact with the weevil.

Perhaps the most persistent of them all is the oil "remedy" in one form or another. It may be kerosene, gasoline, creosote, turpentine! Whatever it happens to be, it is to be mopped on.

The usual suggestion is to tie a sack to the singletree, saturate it with the oil and drag it over the cotton plants while plowing is in progress. The only real difficulty about the oil treatment is that it kills plant tissue wherever it touches it. And it does not repel the weevils.

All it does to them is to let them starve to death if the cotton plants are killed. But what avails that? Indeed nothing repels the boll weevil. Almost every conceivable

chemical has been tested as a repellent and not one of them has ever had any effect on the weevil. One of the big oil companies, some time ago, sent a chemist to Louisiana to work on repellents. He stayed around and finally left in disgust with the statement that he had evolved a smell that would kill a man instantly a half a mile and the boll weevils flocked to it like bees to honey.

Still announcement of repellent "remedies" are coming in all the time and they come from all sorts of sources. Some of them come from men who have a smattering of scientific knowledge. Some come from crooks who know that there is nothing in them. Some come from honest, hard-working negroes—revealed to them, they say, by mysterious voices or in answer to prayer.

Recently a man apparently the founder of a new school of philosophy, claimed that he could speak to the "jotas" of the boll weevil and direct its activities to good instead of evil. The member of the laboratory staff who talked to him did not feel equal to the task of testing anything so deep and the philosopher is taking the matter up with the secretary of agriculture.

**Killing by Explosion** Now and then a "remedy" comes by way of the United States patent office. One that was recently tested out, that of killing the weevils by detonating high explosives in the cotton fields, came by the last named route. The patentee claimed to be able to kill all the weevils without injuring the cotton. In fact, he claimed that the detonations were actually beneficial to the cotton. One of the most efficient men at the Delta laboratory was assigned to make a series of tests. The leaves were blown off a good many plants, but the weevils were not injured.

The quantity of explosives was gradually increased to the point where most of the cotton was bare of leaves, but the weevils were still alive.

One of the most interesting of all the "remedies" thus far proposed is this—

The cotton farmer is to take a hypodermic syringe and inject a certain chemical into every cotton plant in his field. The idea is that the chemical will get into the plant's circulatory system and poison any weevil that feeds on it. The proponents of the scheme overlook the fact that such a process is absolutely contrary to the laws of plant physiology.

In the same class as the hypodermic "remedy" is the often repeated proposal that the cotton seeds be soaked in certain chemicals with the idea that the plants will be made immune to weevil attack, and also the putting of chemicals around the base of the plants with the idea that they will be taken up by the plants and either repel the weevil by making the sap distasteful or poison the weevils. All nonsense.

One of the newest things in this line is described as "a dark colored sand, a natural mineral product." The discoverer says that in his own experience, this sand destroys snails, potato bugs and various other insects. He believes it is the thing to kill the boll weevil. The director of the Delta laboratory wrote him that he would be glad to make tests with the sand, but that it would not be possible until next June when the weevils emerge. The gentleman wrote back, "Let me draw your attention to the fact that this sand is not intended as a killer after the weevil becomes active, but to be preventative of the formation of the boll weevil." The sand is just to be sprinkled on the ground, it appears, and no weevils will come. Bosh!

A man in Mississippi "discovered" or said he did, that boll weevils migrate only at night and in a northeasterly direction. He evolved a "fumigant," made of pine splinters and tar. All that was necessary was to burn this at the northeast corner of the field. It would kill all the weevils. The people at the laboratory made the test and wrote him that, did it did not kill any weevils, it did kill the cotton plants. He replied that it was not a fair test. They had his fumes confined in a small space, he said, and to be effective they had to have all outdoors to operate in.

There are about as many mechanical weevil catchers as there are chemical nostrums. The difference is that the mechanical catcher do not offer as many surprises. They are all just about the same. They got in the game away back at the beginning and, though no one of them ever did collect enough weevils to effect any measure of control unless it injured the cotton so severely to reduce the yield, men all over the cotton belt are still discovering them anew and urging their use with the zeal of missionaries. There was some let-up along this line for a while. The inventive genius of the country had its mind centered on winning the war. Now that the war has been over long enough for the inventors to return to normalcy they are devoting attention to smaller things, and there is a regular flood of mechanical weevil catchers. Every one of them gets its day in court—its field-test for efficiency. All are worthless.

**The Gorgas Memorial** To the Editor of The Robesonian: The following physicians of the county have been appointed by the Robeson County Medical Society as a committee to represent the medical profession in various sections of the county in the Gorgas memorial drive: D. S. Currie, Parkton; J. F. Nash, St. Pauls; G. W. West, Fairmont; W. E. Evans, Rowland; J. A. Martin and E. R. Hardin, Lumberton; B. Frank McMillan, Red Springs; E. G. McMillan, Maxton; T.

M. Watson, Maxton; J. S. Norman, Boardman; E. L. Bowman, McDonald.

The physicians are asked to name a tentative committee of ministers, business and professional men and women to act with them, as a county executive committee.

This is the first great movement to honor a famous Southern physician and sanitarian, and it deserves the hearty and sympathetic cooperation of all our people. The monument is not merely to build a memorial to Gen. Gorgas but to maintain a scientific institute for research and tropical preventive medicine in Panama and to establish a school to train doctors, nurses and engineers for public health work in the South, at Tuscaloosa, Ala.

The Government of Panama has appropriated one half million dollars to build the institute for tropical and preventive medicine in Panama and two million dollars to build a hospital next to it. The purpose of the Gorgas memorial institute in this country is to raise an endowment of six million dollars. The interest on this money to be used to maintain the institute and all its branches in the years to come. North Carolina's allotment toward this endowment is \$100,000 and this should make Robeson county's part around \$1500. Of course I realize that times are hard and our people are tired of drives, having so many calls from Europe for help during the last twelve months. However, this is the first great movement to honor a famous physician of the South, and the South has been asked to do its part first.

The drive to raise North Carolina's, South Carolina's and Virginia's part of the endowment will begin March 15th and last one week; then the other Southern States will be worked in groups of like manner. After this, all the Middle West, West, and North will be covered. Organizations all over the world will contribute toward this endowment to honor Gen. Gorgas and perpetuate his great work for humanity.

E. L. BOWMAN,

President Robeson Co. Med. So.

### Common Sense About Eczema and Eruptions!

Here's Something About S. S. S. That You'll Be Glad to Hear.

You might just as well know it right now—the cause of skin eruptions, pimples, blackheads, boils and so on, is right in the blood. There is no getting away from it. Science has proved it. We prove it. You can prove it. When the cause of skin troubles and eruptions is in the blood, it isn't contagious.



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#### OBITUARY

**J. C. Baxley.** On Friday night, February 10th the gentle spirit of Mr. J. C. Baxley passed from this world of sorrow and trouble unto that land where all is joy and peace, and where sickness and troubles come no more. He was one of the best men this writer ever knew, and we have known him all our life. To know him was to love him. He always had a warm hand-clasp for those he met, and even the little children were greatly attached to him. Raft Swamp church and community have suffered a great loss. He was a deacon and was one of the best most faithful workers we ever saw; his place was never vacant, when there was any service at the church, unless providentially hindered and if there was sickness in the community, or any of his neighbors were in distress he never failed to come. Oh, we loved him, and though we are sorely grieved to give him up, yet we bow in humble submission to the Lord's will for we know he makes no mistakes, and we know we can meet him, and look into that smiling face and clasp the loving hand again, and though he is gone from us, yet his influence will live on and on, and may the young men and boys of his class in Sunday school whom he loved so dearly, and pleased with so earnestly to give their lives to the Saviour, may they hear his voice as it were speaking back to them, and pleading with them yet to surrender. May they try to emulate his life. Oh, that they may go forward and fill his place and carry the work on successfully. To the loved ones who are heart broken we extend our heart-felt sympathy and though we know his place can never be filled, there will be a vacant chair in the home but some day we will meet him again where partings come no more. We sorrow not as those who have no hope. "In my Father's house are many mansions," and he has gone on to receive a crown of life, and has entered into the mansion above.

We'll miss him in the Sunday school, We'll miss him in the home, We'll miss him everywhere, For many days to come, We'll miss his gentle voice and his loving words of cheer, But when we enter heaven we will not miss him there.

The funeral was conducted by Rev. A. E. Paul assisted by Rev. Mr. Cashwell and Rev. Mr. Pridden, and the remains were laid to rest in the cemetery near the church amidst a great host of sorrowing relatives and friends. The service was completely covered with beautiful flowers. MRS. J. ODUM.

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**TRUSTEE'S SALE OF LAND**  
Under and by virtue of the power contained in a certain deed of trust executed to the undersigned trustee by Ira Holmes and wife, Fennie J. Holmes, December 8th, 1920, and registered in book 47, page 216 of Robeson County Registry, the undersigned will expose to public sale to the highest bidder for cash, at the court house door in Lumberton, North Carolina, at about 12 o'clock noon, on the 20th day of March, 1922, the following described lands:  
First Tract: About 1 3/4 miles from the Town of Lumberton, beginning at a stake in the edge of the Marion Stage Road at Nelson Moore's corner, formerly Joe Stone's, and runs about southeast 210 yards to a stake; thence about northeast 35 yards to a stake; thence about northwest 210 yards to the Stage road; thence as said Stage Road 35 yards to the beginning, containing one and one-half acres.  
Second Tract: Situate about two miles south of the Town of Lumberton and on the south side of the Marion Stage Road, beginning at a lightwood stump where Nelson Moore's line joins Owen Pope's line on the said Marion Stage Road, and runs the dividing line about south 20 yards to a stake; thence about west 13 yards to a stake; thence about north 20 yards to a stake at the said Marion Stage Road; thence said Road about east 18 yards to said lightwood stump at the beginning, containing one-fourth acre, more or less.  
This said sale is made on account of default in payment of the indebtedness secured by the said deed of trust and the request of the holder of the note secured thereby.  
Dated this 17th day of February, 1922.  
DICKSON McLEAN,  
McLean, Varsar, McLean & Stacy, Trustee.  
Attorneys. 2-28-4 Thurs.

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