

DESTROYING THE DAIRY INDUSTRY OF ANTS

The Argentine ant, well known pest, has gone seriously into the dairy business in California. Cultivating domestic animals is supposed to be a peculiar function of intelligent man. Not so; the little black ant is no sluggard, and has picked on sap-sucking bugs as its "dairy herd".

The ant has an extremely sweet tooth. It prizes honey most highly, but unhappily it is ejected summarily and violently from bee-hives on all occasions when burglary is attempted. The next best sweetmeat is honey-dew, a saccharine liquid exuded by certain scale insects and lice which infest farm and orchard plants. Ranchers now view the spectacle of industrious ants carrying their honey-cows up into orange trees, seeking new tender foliage which the "herd" will enjoy. The scale insects lack both the enterprize and the ability to reach extensive new grazing territory alone, but under the tender care of the ants they wax fat, multiply and give down much honey-dew. These operations have led hasty observers to conclude that the ants were eating or sucking orange leaves.

But the greediness of the ant is its undoing. The orchardist hangs a dainty morsel of sweet gelatin, or a sponge soaked in syrup, in the tree. The syrup contains about one five-hundredth part of arsenic. The percentage of poison is cleverly adjusted so that the syrup will not kill the roving worker ant, even if the creature stuffs its crop with the bait. On the arrival of the ant at its home colony, however, both queen and young partake and die. The southern California orchardist or housewife can contract nowadays by the year for ant extermination on a city lot, acre or ranch. The business is becoming a recognized part of agricultural insect pest control along with direct campaigns against the sucking gugs themselves.

PHOTOGRAPHY SUCCEEDS IN GETTING UNDER SKIN

Successful snapshots of the microscopic blood vessels under the skin of the living human body have been obtained for the first time by Dr. Charles Sheard of the Mayo clinic at Rochester, Minnesota. Ordinary photographic films were used in the experiment.

One of the chief obstacles encountered in the experiment was due to the fact that it was difficult to get sufficient light returned to the film. This was accomplished by sending a strongly diffused light, one in which heat and some of the shorter wavelengths had been eliminated, down through the skin.

Because of the mechanical jerking of the subject or the apparatus and the rhythmic movement caused by heart beats time exposures could not be made and instantaneous pictures were necessary. The experiment has been so successful that photomicrographs magnified from 10 to 100 times have been made in from one-tenth to one-hundredth of a second.

Dr. Sheard has been able to record every capillary change so that a record approximating in quickness a moving picture camera has been made.

A process has been discovered that makes it possible to obtain brass in colors ranging from bright yellow to orange and from red to blue.
