AGRICULTURE

Borer Campaign A Success

"The corn borer campaign has been successful and has accomplished as far as is humanly possible the object set out to accomplish." This is the verdict given out by the executive committee of the international corn borer organization on the ten-million-dollar war on the corn pest undertaken last spring.

A census of the borer population by actual count has been made in approximately 750 townships in the heavily infested states, declares Dr. W. H. Larrimer, in charge of corn borer work at the U. S. Bureau of Entomology. Results of surveys in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan show that there is an average of 13 borers per 100 corn stalks in the campaign area as opposed to an average of 8 borers per 100 stalks last year. Though this means an increase of 50 per cent. for this year, it compares favorably, the entomologist pointed out, with the 300 per cent. gain made by the borers in 1926 when no general control measures were in operation. The increase came about this year in spite of a cleanup that destroyed 95 per cent. of the borers. For the pests' powers of reproduction, Dr. Larrimer explained, are such that five of an original population of 100 will product an average of 150 more adult corn borer moths. This condition notwithstanding, the Department of Agriculture considers the campaign more effective than it had dared expect.

In the light of the fact that the corn borer feeds on some 225 plants with an expressed preference for a diet of corn stalks, eradication of the pest is considered impossible. Of twelve natural insect enemies of the corn borer imported into this country from Europe in the last six years with the hope of checking its spread, six have become established. While such means of biological control necessarily take years to become effective it is regarded as a very hopeful indication that half of the species of corn borer enemies introduced become permanent residents.

Of the ten million dollars appropriated to fight this foe of America's corn crop, no money has been used for quarantine or research purposes. The bulk of the appropriation has been spent on compensation to farmers for extra work, special machinery, field equipment and supplies and a far reaching educational program.

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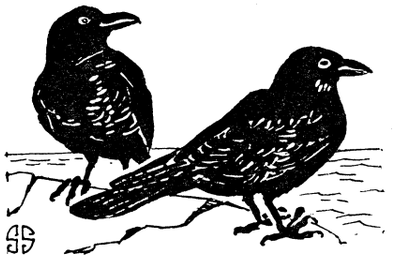
BIOLOGY

NATURE RAMBLINGS

By FRANK THONE



Fish Crow

The common crow of ill cornfield fame is a big, robust, hearty thief, who wins the grudging and oblique admiration most of us accord to a picaresque character. A rogue should be optimistic, or at least bold and cheerful.

But the common crow has a waterfront relative who lacks even this small grace. This is the fish crow, common along the Atlantic coast, and found straggling inland where large bodies of water yield odorous carrion for his sustenance. He never competes with the common crow; he is too small, too weak, too lacking in energy and push to stand up against his stouter cousin.

The fish crow seems to be always shabby. His feathers are never as bright and glossy as those of the ordinary crow, never so smooth and well preened. He seems to be always rusty, always rumpled.

He flies less than the regular crow does, and when he is in the air he flaps along languidly as though he were very, very tired. But mostly he likes to sit on the topmost branch of a tall tree during a thin, slow autumn rain, looking down on passing events, with about as much curiosity as a typhoid convalescent shows. He does not shout his opinions with the vehemence and *elan* of his bigger relative, but cocks his head sidewise and addresses to his mates a weak-voiced, semi-apologetic, interrogative "Caw??"

It must be very sad indeed to be a fish crow.

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CHEMISTRY

Why Sheep Are Black

Quotation from "Brighter Biochemistry" published by the Biochemical Laboratory, Cambridge University.

Baa, baa, black sheep, why so dark your wool?
Of tyrosinase, Sir, our carcasses are full,
Tyrosine in blood-stream, enzyme grabs it quick,
Turns it into melanin, and that does the trick.

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SOCIOLOGY

Successes Have Most Children

The squawks of alarm that go up from every eugenics congress over the falling birth rate of the intelligentsia have received a rude damper.

Armed with the 25th anniversary records of graduates of Harvard University and a copy of "Who's Who," Dr. Frederick Adams Woods, formerly professor of biology at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has set out to establish in the forthcoming issue of the Journal of Heredity that there is a correlation between high achievement and big families. Big, that is, for these days.

Dr. Woods picked classes that have been graduated 25 years because, he says, "Further distinction, unknown successes and failures may lie ahead, but not many will be the parents of any more children."

While "Who's Who in America" is no perfect test, he continues, of either mental superiority or what is commonly known as success, it is fairly probable that the classmates included in it would average more success than those not included.

Comparing these two sources of information, Dr. Woods found that 25.5 per cent. of the parents with four or more children in the class of 1894 were listed in "Who's Who" while the percentage of the unmarried so represented was only 6.3. In the class of 1898 all percentages were found to be lower due to the fact that the same issue of "Who's Who" was used in each case. Again the fathers of four plus showed the highest ratios and the bachelors the lowest. The highest ratios in the 1890 class were found for the parents of three, while this time the bachelors beat the parents with four or more offspring 15.1 to 14.3. The figures for the three classes added together, however, gave an almost smooth proportionate rise.

"I added the story from 1892," declares Dr. Woods, "and now, combining the four series of records, I feel practically sure that those who have the most children are the ones on the average who achieve the most success. Those who at some time in their lives marry but never have any offspring are about in the same standing as the parents, but the falling off for the unmarried is very marked. The figures run 9.7 for bachelors, 16.4 for married but childless, then 16.9, 16.8, 18.9 and 18.1 for one, two, three, four or more children respectively."

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