

COCKROACHES AND THEIR CONTROL.

(By John L. Froggatt, B.Sc., Entomologist.)

These household pests are nocturnal in habit, hiding in any dark crevices, corners or cupboards during the day, and coming out to feed at night. Kitchens are particularly favoured by the attention of these obnoxious insects, but by carefully locating any sheltering sites are fairly easily treated.

The most satisfactory chemical for killing these insects is *sodium fluoride*, a white powder. Although poisonous to humans, if taken internally in sufficient quantity, provided reasonable care is taken in its use, the risk of contamination of foods is negligible.

The best method of reaching the cockroaches is to dust this powder into crevices by means of a small blow-gun or bellows, or scatter it on the floor and shelves of cupboards. The insects pick up the powder on the legs and antennae ("feelers") and, in order to clean off the powder, drain these members between the mouth parts; by this means the poison passes to the stomach and kills the insects.

In dry situations, the powder remains more or less indefinitely, but where subject to moisture, it is liable to cake and become useless. In such cases, it may be advisable to blow the dust into the hiding places once a week at least.

Another matter that should receive careful attention is the masses of eggs. These are enclosed in a brown capsule about half an inch long and rounded on the ends; the outer side is often covered with a white mealy-like powder. These are placed in cracks along wainscoting, crevices, behind doors, &c. Wherever found, they should be destroyed, as each capsule contains a number of eggs.

As cockroaches breed in heaps of decaying leaves, &c., care should be taken to turn over periodically any heaps of garden rubbish, &c., in the vicinity of dwellings.
