

For the preparation of a rubber sheet weighing  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lb.,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  oz. of sugar (half match box full), dissolved in  $\frac{1}{4}$  pint of water, should be added to  $\frac{1}{2}$  gallon of undiluted latex. (One pound of sugar in 2 gallons of water per 100 lb. of dry rubber.)

#### OTHER COAGULANTS.

Lime juice contains 5-10 per cent. of citric acid and may prove useful as a coagulant for small holders. The juice of 3-6 limes, depending on ripeness and juiciness, is required for the coagulation of a rubber sheet weighing  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lb.

Various other plant juices and extracts are stated to be used by small holders when normal coagulants are unobtainable or unduly expensive. *Goraka* fruits, when extracted twice by boiling with water, were found to have an acid content of approximately 10 per cent. The extract from 1 lb. of semi-dried *goraka* fruits would thus suffice for the coagulation of 20 lb. of rubber. *Weera* and *kamaranga* fruits also yield acid extracts.

No great objection can be raised to the use of such products in an emergency, but vinegar or coco-nut water are considered preferable.

Under the present exceptional conditions it may be necessary as a temporary measure for some producers to vary their normal methods of coagulation. *It is, however, very strongly urged that normal procedure should be resumed at the earliest possible moment with a view to maintaining the Island's reputation for producing good-quality plantation rubber.*

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### THE TROPICAL GRASS, "*MELINIS MINUTIFLORA*", AS A PREVENTATIVE AGAINST MALARIA AND OTHER TROPICAL DISEASES.

It is recommended that Gordura grass, *Melinis minutiflora*, should be planted around all dwelling-houses in Venezuela, as a protection against malaria and tick-borne diseases of animals, as mosquitoes are almost completely absent from pastures planted with this grass as long as it is in the green stage, and cattle covered with ticks when entering such pastures become free after a few weeks. The grass, which is rich in protein, and, therefore, is extensively planted for fattening animals, is rather coarse for sheep, but suitable for cattle, horses and mules. Although generally used for pasture it can also be cut for fodder. It cannot be grown on swampy ground, but thrives on arid soil. It has a peculiar penetrating odour and contains an oily substance, which probably accounts for its "anti-verminous" effects. At the height of the dry season, on exceptionally arid soil, the stems may get dry and a good deal of the oily contents disappears, in which case some pests, particularly ticks, may be found in the pasture.—(*Extract from "The Review of Applied Entomology", December, 1940.*)