SPRAYING FAILS TO KILL NEW YORK DANDELIONS.

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FROM BULLETIN BY
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Dandelions are regarded with dis-favor by practically every lawn-owner. Their rapid growth, crowding out the grass, prevents the development of an even sward; and their coarse leaves, unsightly flower-stalks and fuzzy tops serve as unseemly decorations for the ideal lawn. They have been fought, and usually with slight success, wherever they have appeared in dooryards, parks or boulevards. Digging them up is tedious and disheartening; for their abundance makes it no small task to cut them out even on a few square yards, and unless cut very deeply, new crowns form and the owner's labors result only in an increase in the numbers of plants. In tests at the Station two plants were cut off repeatedly, below the crown, before any of the new leaves were four inches long; yet one plant died only after seven cuttings, the other after eight.

Spraying unsuccessful. In other parts of the country, spraying with iron sulphate (copperas) has been reported successful in controlling these lawn pests; so that it was with high hopes that an experiment along this line was started on the Station grounds. A 10-ft. strip about 100 feet long of blue-grass lawn was sprayed six times during the summer of 1909 with iron sulphate solution containing 1 1/2 lbs. of the chemical in a gallon of water, the sprayings being about four weeks apart and made, as far as possible, under conditions thought best adapted to kill the weeds. Success was not reached that year; so in 1910 the sulphate was increased to 2 lbs. to the gallon, the applications were made two weeks apart, and in three treatments the strip was covered twice, spraying from different directions.

By the end of June, six treatments had been given and the effect on the grass of the lawn, with checking of growth by drouth, made it unsafe to spray longer. At this time 1,085 living dandelion plants still remained on the thousand square feet of sprayed lawn; few less than on the untreated lawn beside the strip.

The spray blackened the dandelion foliage, so that the first impression was that the treatment was effective. It did retard or prevent blossoming; but it did not destroy the roots. The application of the copperas also made the grass foliage black and unsightly, though this effect usually disappeared before the next spraying.

In no way, however, can spraying with iron sulphate be considered a success in removing dandelions from lawns in New York State.

* This is a brief review of Bulletin No. 335 of this Station, on Spraying to Eradi-cate Dandelions from Lawns, by G. T. French.