

# Putting Trees in a Treeless Land

How the Men and Women of the prairies are being helped to better homes and higher profits

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*"In that school of eighteen pupils, only three had ever seen a tree and there are thousands living on the prairie to-day who have never seen one big enough to climb."*

IT IS NOT my intention to outline herewith the history of the Canadian Forestry Association's Tree Planting Campaign but to give the readers an idea of the problems and experiences encountered while carrying on with the Tree Planting Car during the past few months.

We have been travelling over what one could call old ground, that is to say country visited on previous occasions, and consequently we have had an excellent opportunity to observe at first hand whether or not our information is reaching the right people and what they are doing with it. The gratifying thing about it is that we are finding traces at every place visited for the second time, that the information we have been able to give is being used. We get proof of this in the form of new plantings around home, school and church grounds, boulevarding of streets, planting of small town parks and cemeteries and in numerous other ways. Interest in tree planting has never been greater and we are kept busy from morning till night attending to visitors at the car, going with owners in town and country to inspect their places, laying out school and church grounds, parks and boulevards with groups of business men from the towns, and carrying on with our usual lectures. We have the school children through the day and at night give our regular lecture to the adults. The school meetings are so arranged that the lower grades will be kept separate from the older and more advanced students. The tots are given a movie show and a few simple words on trees, while the senior pupils are given the regular illustrated lecture. The little ones are most enthusiastic

and receive the movies with loud cries and shouts. In many cases it is the first time they have ever seen such a thing and the remarks of the youngsters are consequently amusing and sometimes pathetic. One little girl was frightened of the dark. She liked the pictures but the dark was too much for her and she gave way to tears. She was taken to the back of the car, comforted as well as possible and finally quieted. By this time she was well acquainted with the writer and the following conversation passed between them:



Tree Planting Lecture Car of the Canadian Forestry Association

"God's in every house, isn't He mister?"

"Yes, He's in every house."

"He's up the chimney with Santa Claus, isn't He?"

"Yes, He's up there too."

She was quiet for three or four minutes but the little mind was working all the time. "Well then, where is he in this house; there's no chimney?" This followed by another outburst of tears and a hard job to convince the little lady that the ventilator over the gas light was chimney enough.

## Had never seen a Tree

On another occasion while showing a film entitled "Capturing Live Bears" in which a guide is seen

climbing a tree after a cub, one of the little fellows cried out in sheer amazement, "Oh look at the man climbing the telephone pole". The poor little chap had never seen a tree big enough to climb and had taken this fine specimen of a spruce for one of the native prairie telephone poles. In that school of eighteen pupils, only three had ever seen a tree and there are thousands living on the prairie to-day who have never seen one big enough to climb.

The older pupils, both Public and High School, are the finest lecturing material we can find anywhere. Used to being spoken to at school, still at the stage where they can take in information without any difficulty and because we have something different to offer them, they are always attentive and we get good hearings. Now that the Departments of Education at Regina and Edmonton have included the subject of Tree Planting amongst those on which essays must

be written during the term, our lecture offered the pupils a splendid opportunity to get this information and they invariably attended with note books and pencils. A good thorough talk was given them, followed with an illustrated address on the laying out of the home grounds and results already obtained by farmers throughout the country. Later, when possible, came an outside demonstration at some nearby shelter belt where actual planting, pruning, preparing of cuttings, etc., was shown.

## Why the Prairies are Treeless

The evening lectures are always well attended and on numerous occasions we have found it extremely difficult to accommodate everybody seeking