

FAST GROWING TREES

Trees for Shade and Summer Fuel or the Cottage by the Lake

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NOTE:—The writer of this article will be glad to answer questions on farm forestry or forest tree planting work. Inquiries should be sent care of Canadian Forestry Association, Ottawa.

MOST folks when contemplating tree planting, shun the idea of using fast growing trees. The reason being, and rightly so, that a fast growing tree is a short lived tree. The fact that a certain rapidly growing species may hold its shape and growth for a period of man's life is overlooked and because it is popularly classed as short lived, it is not planted. Now it is not the intention of the writer to advocate the wholesale planting of fast growing trees at the sacrifice of the many splendid long lived trees which are native to our country, but there are times when a farmer, or suburbanite, or the owner of a cottage by the lake wants trees and wants them quickly. This article is intended for such planting and describes two trees which are among the fastest growing in our country.

The green or white willow (*salix alba*) is a tree which is common throughout Canada, especially on good soil and where there is plenty of moisture. Old residents in the east tell us that this tree was introduced from the United States forty or fifty years ago and the cuttings were sold in small packages like so many pencils, and were recommended for hedges. Today the results of this advice may be seen, for usually where old trees are found they are in thick rows along the borders of fields or streams. As a tree for hedge purposes, as we usually think of a hedge—low and well trimmed—the white willow is not suited as well as some of our species, especially evergreens. But for

windbreak purposes, or where a wall of trees is required very quickly it is well suited, although the roots, which travel a long way for water, may cause some inconvenience bordering tillable land.

Stories of the rapidity of growth of green willow have been told in every community. I recall the farmer who repaired his fence bordering on some low ground, with a green willow post. Today it is the steadiest one of all, as it has grown into a tree

and awkward to get at when time could best be spared. One winter they got together and settled the trouble for all time. A number of stakes 3-4 inches in diameter and 5-7 feet long were cut from green willow. Holes were cut in the ice at intervals along the fence line, and the stakes were driven home. In the spring the stakes commenced to grow and not long after the fence was strung on the living posts.

The Carolina poplar (*populus deltoides*) is a member of this often maligned family, which is not generally known by people in our country. It's home is in the southern part of Ontario where it comes over from a wide distribution in the United States. It is often called cottonwood and sometimes necklace poplar, and is similar in appearance, but not so hardy as Russian poplar which has been grown extensively of late years in the west. This member of the family develops a full tapering crown with an abundance of large dark green leaves, which make it a valuable tree for shade purposes.



A Row of Carolina Poplar, nine years old, planted for shade on a village street.

thirty feet high. Recently a farmer told me about a man who drove some cattle to his father's farm years ago. When the job was done and his use for the willow came with which he drove the herd was finished, he stuck it on end in the ground. Today it has developed into a tree three feet in diameter. Two neighbors had trouble with a part of their boundary fence. The section in question was on low ground which was wet a large part of the year. It was difficult to keep the fence in repair

poses. It does well on light soil and poor sand providing there is a fair amount of moisture and will put on from five to ten feet in a year.

Not long ago the writer had occasion to visit a small village in eastern Ontario. The surrounding country had few trees for shade purposes, and the village itself until recently was lacking in this regard. One citizen, however, took the matter to heart and planted a row of Carolina poplars. In nine years the trees had over-topped the roofs of the