
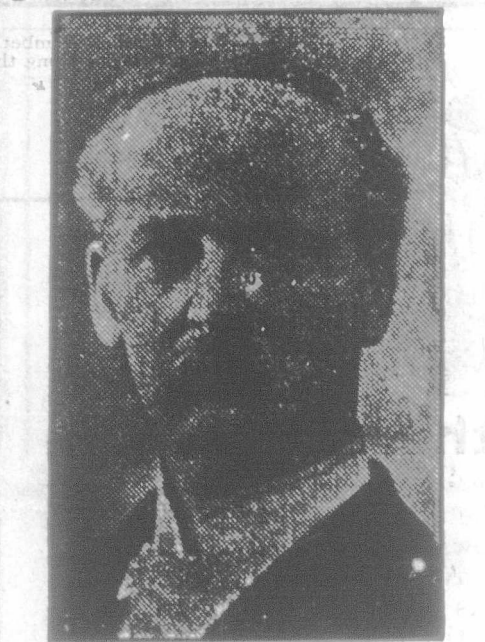


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plantation and recommends the varieties of trees best adapted to the local conditions. The applicant signs an agreement to the effect that he will plant the trees, cultivate them and protect them from stock and fire, under instructions furnished by the Forestry Branch. Only as many trees are given to each applicant in one season as in the opinion of the inspector can be properly looked after. If in following years additional trees are wanted they are supplied when possible, but not where those previously planted have been in any way neglected.

This cooperative scheme has now been in operation for five seasons and the results obtained have almost exceeded the anticipations of the Department and are most encouraging to those employed in this branch of work. In order to show most readily the increasing popularity of this scheme in the West and the great influence it must have in encouraging a more general interest in tree planting I will give the number of trees and cuttings sent out by the Forestry Branch of the Interior.

In 1901.....	58,000
" 1902.....	468,000
" 1903.....	920,000
" 1904.....	1,800,000
" 1905.....	2,000,000

and there are in the nurseries at the present time, ready for distribution next spring something over 2,100,000; so that after next spring's distribution there will have been sent out by this Branch a total of 7,347,700 seedlings and cuttings, besides considerable quantities of maple and ash seed; roughly speaking, a sufficient amount of material to plant up, according to our system of setting trees four feet apart each way, an area of over 2,700 acres. This area compared to the total area of the North-west is very small, but it is made up of plantations varying from one-half to perhaps 15 acres in size, scattered all over the prairie regions at present under settlement. The great value of these plantations does not lie in the actual returns that could be at present or in the future obtained from them so much as in their educational value. Each plantation, no matter how small, is an object lesson to the surrounding neighborhood, demonstrating the possibility of successful tree culture where proper methods of cultivation are employed.

In order to supply the large number of seedlings required for this work the Forestry Branch has established a nursery station at Indian Head in Saskatchewan containing 160 acres where practically all the nursery stock with the exception of cottonwood to be distributed will be grown. The Dakota cottonwood is a tree of very rapid growth on the prairies and suitable for pioneer planting in most districts. Seedlings of this tree can be imported from the Western States where large numbers are obtained growing on the sand bars of the rivers, much more cheaply than they can be raised in a nursery. This, however, is the only variety distributed which is not grown on the Forestry Branch nurseries. Besides growing nursery stock at this station it is intended also to set out

several test plantations from which reliable data can in the future be obtained as to the cost of establishment, maintenance and yields. Work will also be done in the cultivation of varieties not yet fully tested and more particular attention will be given to the raising and planting of the hardy conifers.

As soon as the work of the Forestry Branch becomes more fully developed considerable planting will no doubt be done on many of the western forest reserves. Experiments on a very small scale were started in 1904 and continued last spring in planting Scotch pine on the very sandy soil of the spruce woods reserve east of Brandon in the Province of Manitoba. The results so far are encouraging and planting will be continued next spring. In this reserve there are several townships composed of light sandy soil unfitted for agricultural purposes and scattering wooded with white spruce and the low spots with tamarac and black spruce, and can only prove of value for the production of coniferous timber.

In the future undoubtedly the most extensive planting operations will be carried on by the Government in the forest reserves. The railways will also plant up comparatively large tracts to tamarac, jack pine and perhaps Scotch pine for the production of ties. At present the cost of transportation is very great and the sources from which ties can be obtained are gradually diminishing, which facts are forcing some of the western lines to very seriously consider the question of growing their own supply.

Planting by the private individual will not be done on any large scale unless in exceptional cases. Such planting will be limited to the cultivation of shelter belts and perhaps a few acres for fencing and fuel. If, however, every settler does his share the prairies will very soon present a different appearance and the resulting benefit to the general welfare and comfort can hardly be over estimated.

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