



How is this for fruit growing on the Canadian prairies? Photograph shows a plum tree, "mammoth" variety, heavily fruited. It grows at Indian Head, Sask., and was made possible by shelter belts.

no parent bluffs preserved from old fires to serve as neucleii for new forest spread. The difference as seen from the railway was very remarkable.

The spread westwards of the trees has met with a decided check in recent years by reason of the clay of the Regina Plains. The bluffs on the margin are bigger, and the trees much larger in the last ten years, but the actual tree-spread has not advanced much westward, as the soil is a heavy clay, the surface of which dries up very quickly after a rain and leaves little chance for seed to germinate.

Chinooks Not Responsible.

Any old timer in Southern Alberta or S.W. Saskatchewan will tell you the Prairie is treeless because of the Chinooks. "The warm winds come along in January or February and the trees start growing. Then a change takes place, the wind switches round to the north, down she goes 30 or 40 below, and the trees die." That is the theory, but for 23 years we have never seen the slightest vestige of it. Introduced trees like the Manitoba Maple and some of the softer poplars may have suffered from the Chinooks, though even that is not always clear. Usually the trouble with such trees comes from overgrowth in the fall as a result of the habit of the tree or because of too much late rain followed by an early frost, or too dry a condition in the fall to go through the winter. Late frosts in the spring are also responsible for a good deal of damage.

The native trees, the Cottonwood, the Aspen, and other Poplars do not suffer

from the Chinooks. If so, those fine 40 or 50 feet Balms at Calgary, High River, Macleod, Lethbridge and Cardston would have been dead long ago. The Poplar bluffs round Okotoks would be non-existent. These really owe their preservation to the coulees and the snowdrifts in the burning season. One has only to look at the map to see how the district is criss-crossed with little creeks. Wherever there are creeks, there you find coulees and where there are coulees, there you find snow drifts in the spring and the fall.

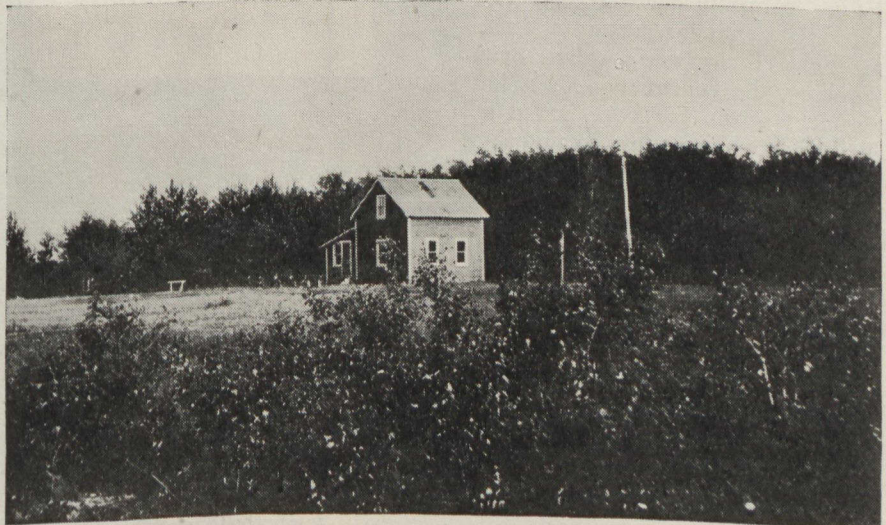
And we have not forgotten the acre or so of Aspen that used to be in the Porcupine hills west of Parkland, right in the middle of the table-land between Boneyard and Pine Coulee, miles away from any other tree. The ground up there was

covered with ground cedar, or Dwarf Juniper, and the fires could not travel over.

Natural Barriers.

Nor the so-called "Pines" a few miles west of the Oxley Ranch which were really a group of some half dozen Douglas Fir about 4 feet in diameter. They were able to survive because they were growing on the little flat top of an ancient land slide, some ten feet below the level of the Prairie and about the same distance from it. Snowdrifts had collected between the Prairie and the trees and stopped the fires, though three times at least had they leaped the barrier as could be seen by the fire marks on the bark of the original trees and by the successive stages of the young growth coming on below. They were exposed on all sides to the Chinooks which never did them the least damage.

Nor must we forget the little group of trees on Arrowood creek about twenty miles east of High River which used to stand up in the middle of the Prairie, and looked in the distance like an oasis in the desert. Little cutbanks and sloughs kept the fires back there. And the Old lone tree on the north side of the Piegan Reserve, right on the edge of the cutbank boundary of the Old Man river, and 200 feet above it, looking from a distance as if it was growing on the very edge of the level Prairie. Close examination showed the "why" of its existence quite clearly, for centuries ago a piece of the Cut Bank had slid bodily forward about twenty feet and left a hollow five or six feet deep between its crest and the Prairie. The tree was right on the top of this crest and the snow gathering in the hollow had preserved it from the fires. If the Chinooks had been the deadly detriment to tree growth as so many people claim, that tree had no business to be growing at all. But it was growing, and, moreover had its use, for at the time of our visit it had,



A cosily sheltered prairie home, surrounded by native bush carefully preserved.