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WHEN WRITING TO ADVERTISERS PLEASE MENTION THE GUIDE

School Plantations and Gardens

Planting a Shelter Belt—Patriotic Garden Work

By H. W. Watson

On the grounds of the vast majority of schools in Manitoba there are but few trees or shrubs that are worth being preserved from an ornamental point of view. There is, however, some material that may be utilized by transplanting to a more favorable position. It is very necessary that trustees, teachers and pupils should unite in a continuous effort to improve all school grounds by planting permanent material such as trees and shrubs. A plan for continuous planting should be made out and followed from year to year. Pupils passing through the school will from year to year learn how to plant and what to plant; will go home and plant and when they have homes of their own will continue to plant.

There are two main objects in planting trees and shrubs in school grounds: (1) Improvement for an educational purpose; as many varieties as possible of a suitable character should be used. (2) Improvement from an esthetic standpoint; varieties chosen should be arranged to harmonize and produce beauty.

Preparation of the Soil

Thoroughly cultivate a strip of ground about six feet wide and to a depth of eight or ten inches to make the soil loose or porous. A crop of potatoes or other hoed crop is an excellent preparation. Failing this a good deep summerfallow does well. Plow deeply in the fall, but not in the spring. Keep the soil surface well cultivated for the first two or three years. A hoed crop amongst the trees serves the purpose well. Transplant the trees as early in the spring as possible and before they begin to leaf out. Evergreens should be removed from the end of May to the middle of June. Place the trees about ten feet apart in the row so that each alternate one may be removed when they are larger to leave room for the permanent ones; or better still, alternate the higher growing trees with native spruce or shrubbery. Select small trees, deciduous, trees from six to eight feet high and evergreens two to three feet high. Obtain the trees from the same locality and growing under similar conditions. In lifting a tree, cut only the larger roots, retaining the smaller feeding roots with as much soil as possible adhering to them. It is well to wrap the roots with a wet sack or to cover them with manure or wet straw to keep them free from the sun or wind.

Prepare a hole deeper than that from which the tree came and wide enough to allow the roots to be widely spread out. Place the tree in the centre and while holding it erect with one hand spread out the roots with the other and place around and over them a liberal supply of the finest top soil. Firm the soil about the roots and if it is fairly dry pour in about a pailful of water. Fill in the rest of the soil, tramping it at the same time with the heel of the boot. Leave the surface as fine as possible and throw a small quantity of mulch about the tree. If the tree is rather branching, trim off some of the top to suit the weakened condition of the roots, but only take off the lower, longer branches, leaving the upper, younger and more vigorous shoots.

School Gardening for 1917

No school in Manitoba is complete without a garden and there are few schools that cannot have one, either in the school ground or in land adjacent, if only the teacher will take the initiative. Even freshly broken prairie soil will produce a good crop of potatoes or other hardy marketable vegetables if cultivated properly. It has been suggested that every school in Manitoba have a school garden devoted largely to vegetables, planted and cared for by the children under the advice and direction of the teacher, and that the proceeds be donated to soldiers' widows and their children. The war may be over before autumn, let us earnestly hope that it will, but we will have in every municipality many wives and children of dead or disabled heroes who are worthy of our greatest assistance for all time. The nurses and councillors of every municipality will be most willing to co-operate in this good work. Every teacher should interest the children in this patriotic production, both at school and in the home, and arrange for the

satisfactory disposal of the products. It has been estimated that a plot thirty to forty feet square will not cost above two or three dollars for seed and may produce vegetables valuing \$25 or more. This is a possibility for the smallest rural school, or for many a healthy farm boy in his father's garden at home.

To get the best results, the soil should be brought into a good fine tilth. A spade, a hoe, a garden rake and a digging fork are the four chief tools needed in gardening. Clay soils should not be dug when they are very wet as they will bake badly; by waiting until they are so dry that the earth will not stick to the fork they can be worked more easily and without fear of baking. A liberal covering of well-rotted manure will amply repay the additional labor required. The soil should be dug or plowed to a depth of six or seven inches and the manure fully buried in the bottom. The surface soil should be made level, smooth and as fine as possible. If the soil to a depth of two or three inches is in good condition, even the smallest vegetable seeds will usually germinate well. Do not raise the soil in the plots, except in clay soil, during early spring.

Time of Sowing

1.—In hot-beds or flats inside, to be transplanted: Cabbage, cauliflower, celery, tomatoes.

2.—Early as the ground is ready: Beets, carrots, lettuce, radish, onions, parsnips, peas, cress, spinach, parsley, early turnips.

3.—After danger of frost is over: Beans, corn, squash, cucumbers, tomatoes, potatoes, Swede turnips.

SLOUGH FOR GARDEN

Sloughs are not suited for gardening purposes because most garden crops require an early, warm soil. Swamps or low land have not these qualifications because the excessive moisture causes a large amount of evaporation and, consequently, a cold soil. A garden also requires intensive cultivation. Therefore, if the crop were destroyed by excess moisture later in the season, the loss would be greater than if the land were seeded with grain or grass. Low land, such as this, can usually be sown to advantage with red top and western rye because these crops can stand water lying on the surface of the land early in the season and still produce profitable crops. If the slough is seeded to these grasses, a fine, level seed bed should be prepared by the use of the disc and drag harrow and the seed sown between May 15 and June 15 at the rate of eight pounds of western rye and six pounds of red top per acre. If it is not practicable to seed the slough with grass and put a garden on high land it might be prepared for growing vegetables by the following method. By under drains or open ditches drain the land so that the water will run off early in the spring and keep it dry all summer. Break the land about three inches deep before July 1. Backset the land in August or September, six inches deep if the soil is deep enough to allow for this. If the soil is shallower do not plow so deeply. Prepare a seed bed by a liberal use of the disc and drag harrow.

The following spring disc and harrow again before planting the seed. The portion which was broken the previous fall might be utilized after draining for some of the coarser crops, such as turnips, cabbage, etc. Before these seeds are planted the land should be thoroughly disced and drag harrowed to prepare a fine, level seed bed. If the breaking was poorly done it might be advisable to plow again before discing and harrowing. It is quite possible that this land would be sour because of the location. Should it give an acid reaction, a liberal application of lime would rectify it. If it has not a peat or moss bottom, the use of well rotted barnyard manure would loosen and warm up the soil.—Prof. T. J. Harrison, M.A.C.

Apple Crop prospects in the East are discouraging. After a trip through Ontario, the eastern states and the maritime provinces Mr. Vroom, of the fruit branch, Ottawa, says that he expects a light crop this year.

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