Commission of Conservation

CANADA

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CONSERVATION is published the first of each month. Its object is the dissemination of information relative to the natural resources of Canada, their development and the proper conservation of the same, together with timely articles covering town-planning and public health.

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We recognize as natural resources all materials available for the use of man as means of life and welfare, including those on the surface of the earth, like the soil and the waters; those below the surface, like the minerals; and those above the surface, like the forests. We agree that these resources should be developed, used and conserved for the future, in the interests of mankind, whose rights and duties to guard and control the natural sources of life and welfare are inherent, perpetual and indefeasible. We agree that those resources which are necessities of life should be regarded as public utilities, that their ownership entails specific duties to the public, and that, as far as possible, effective measures should be adopted to guard against monopoly. —*Declaration of Principles of North American Conservation Conference.*

People with a garden, and the necessary time, can greatly lessen the food cost by canning their own fruits and vegetables.

Home-grown fruit is cheaper than any other. A small garden may be made to yield a great variety.

Keep down the weeds in the garden. They take proportionately as much nourishment from the soil as the vegetables.

Piles of trash and rubbish in fence corners and in out-of-the-way places around the yard, or in the attic or cellar, are inanimate "fire traps" waiting only for the opportune spark or the slower process of spontaneous combustion to burst into flame.

Fighting the Pine Blister

Co-operation Between Government Departments to Eradicate the Disease

Arrangements have been completed for thorough co-operation between the Dominion Department of Agriculture and the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, in the investigation, location and eradication of the white pine blister disease in those provinces. The Department of Agriculture will also conduct investigations in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and British Columbia, where the disease is not yet known to exist. Should it be found in those provinces, co-operative arrangements will no doubt be made, and vigorous action will be taken to combat its spread.

The pine blister disease has gained a strong foothold in the north-eastern United States, and has been discovered also in Ontario and in Quebec. In the former province, the situation is most serious in the Niagara peninsula. The white pine forests of Canada are valued at $200,000,000, so that the most thorough measures are justified for the protection of this great asset. The young forest growth suffers most severely from this disease, and it is of the greatest importance that the large area of white pine reproduction in eastern Canada receive protection, in order that they may reach maturity and add their quota to the wealth of the country.

Subject to the general supervision of Dr. J. H. Grisdale, Director of Experimental Farms and Acting Dominion Botanist, the field work will be in charge of W. A. McCubbin of the Field Laboratory of Plant Pathology at St. Catharines, Ont. A senior and two junior assistants are provided, who will specialize in research work calculated to determine the best methods of control of the disease in question.

The actual work of scouting for the disease and eradicating it when found will be performed by men provided by the forest services of Ontario and Quebec respectively. The salaries of these men will be paid by the provinces and their travelling expenses by the Dominion. Twenty such inspectors are now at work in Ontario, and twenty in Quebec. In the latter province, the scouting will be under the direction of Chas. C. Gosselin and Henry Roy, of the Quebec forest service, on the north and south shores of the St. Lawrence, respectively.

Until June 10 the work of location and eradication will be confined to white pine. After that date similar work will be in hand on the currants and gooseberr.es, which are alternate hosts of the pine blister disease.

Work is now under way, in connection with clearing currants and gooseberries, both wild and cultivated, from a strip one mile wide, along the bank of the Niagara river, from Niagara-on-the-Lake to Fort Erie, to form a safety belt which will prevent the disease from passing over the river into New York state. On the New York side of the river, similar work will be done by the state, for the protection of Ontario. Pines in this strip on both sides of the river will be dealt with later if necessary.

In connection with the location of the disease on currants, it is proposed to utilize the services of public school pupils. The currant stage of the disease is readily recognized and the pupils will be able to render a valuable public service by reporting any outbreaks found. Literature and coloured illustrations will be furnished, and instructions given through the teachers.—C.L.

Saving the Surplus

Home Canning of Vegetables is Practicable and Necessary

The shortage of labour and the scarcity and high price of tin cans has very materially reduced the output and increased the cost of canned vegetables; so much so, in fact, as to make some lines almost prohibitive to the average family.

There is little reason, however, for any Canadian family not providing a sufficient supply for next winter. Home canning of vegetables is a simple matter; when put up in ordinary glass jars, securely sealed, they are equal if not superior to the factory brand, and the cost is much lower.

Peas, string beans, sweet corn, pumpkins, beets, tomatoes and all vegetables which will not keep without cooking, may be canned.

After cleaning and preparing the vegetables to be preserved, they are enclosed in a cheesecloth bag and parboiled for five minutes. They are then dipped in cold water, packed in glass jars, boiling water poured over them to fill up all crevices, and the lids loosely adjusted. The jars are then placed in an ordinary boiler filled with water, with plates or dish covers to prevent the jars touching the bottom of the boiler, and are allowed to boil steadily for 3½ hours. When lifted from the boiler, the lids must be screwed down tight, and the jars allowed to gradually cool, care being taken that they are not exposed to drafts, as a sudden cooling may crack the glass.

Vegetables thus canned will keep and be a welcome addition to the table in lieu of the high-priced canned goods, and the surplus supply of vegetables, which otherwise might be wasted, will be conserved.

Infant Welfare

Insanitary Conditions Largely Responsible for High Death Rate

If insanitation is without influence on the rate at which children die, how comes it that towns notoriously insanitary have an infant death rate four or five times that of clean well-governed cities, that in the certain overcrowded slum areas the children die six times as rapidly as those in better class residential districts, that among 1,000 infants born to unskilled labourers only 700 survive the first year of life, while out of the same number of births 960 babies of professional men reach their first birthday?

If the causative organism of diarrhoea and enteritis is to be found in decomposing filth, particularly that of human origin, why does the death rate from these diseases suddenly increase during the third quarter of the year? The answer has been supplied by the investigations of Niven and other workers in the field of preventive medicine, who have shown that a prevalence of flies is closely followed by an increase in the number of deaths from summer diarrhoea, and that as the flies disappear, or become inactive, the epidemic passes away.—*Dr. Joseph Cates in Journal of the Royal Sanitary Institute.*

Utilisation of Waste Materials

Britain is finding herself in many ways owing to the war. One source of much revenue, as well as of a requisite in the preparation of explosives, is found in the camp refuse. The *Yorkshire Post*, in describing the results secured under a process for utilizing the camp refuse by the Quartermaster-General's Department, says:

"While the English-made glycerine was $290 per ton, the United States fixed their figure at $1,200 per ton. During the first month the scheme was put into operation, a weekly return to the Army for camp refuse was made of $9,000. In January of this year, the weekly amount increased to $47,500, representing approximately $2,500,000 annually returned to the Army for waste rations. The production of glycerine from these waste camp products enabled the Ministry of Munitions to dispense with over 1,000 tons of foreign glycerine at a saving in cost of $900,000." (Foregoing figures on basis of $5.00 equivalent of £1.)

Health, civic beauty and safety from fire are all promoted by every effort put forth toward cleaning up.