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Root Injury From Burning.

Repeated fires have destroyed the soil and bark about the roots of this tree

### The Woodlot—A True Friend of the Farmer!

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

A good woodlot or bush is one of the greatest possessions of the modern farm. While Eastern Canada has been wise enough to retain a wooded portion on the majority of farm holdings, the valuation of trees on a common sense basis has been a comparatively recent development. Destruction of bush has proceeded extravagantly, and while thousands of farms still boast a patch of trees, other thousands have through careless treatment forfeited this greatest of farm blessings.

No farmer, with a picturesque acre or two of oak, hickory, maple, elm, birch, or pine, softening down the edges of his meadow, guaranteeing him for all time to come timber, fence posts, and fuel, shielding his farm from drying and destructive winds, improving the fertility of the open fields,—a thing at once of beauty, comfort, and commercial value—no farmer need be told to-day why he should place a high value on his area of trees.

It is not the object of this brief article, to enlarge upon the use of the woodlot, which is altogether obvious, but to assist the farmer possessing a woodlot, in any stage of development, to make the most of his property. I am sure that the hundreds of Ontario farmers who have adopted these directions feel well repaid for the slight trouble and watchfulness expended.

The farmer who permits stock to graze in the woodlot pays dearly for the pasturage. Goats,

sheep, horses and cows will all destroy hardwood seedlings by browsing on them. Goats and sheep are the worst offenders in this respect. They will eat many woody plants not touched by the others and during the hot part of a summer day they stay in the shady part of the woods, nibbling at the small trees, in preference to grazing on the grass growing in the sunny openings. Saplings are trampled down in great numbers and destroyed.

The hardwood seedlings are the ones most injured by browsing. Spruce, balsam, fir, cedar, larch and pine are practically immune. Maple, ash, basswood, elm, chestnut, and oak suffer worst; walnut, hickory, willow and birch do so to a less degree.

Another serious mischief attributable to live stock in the woodlot is the destruction of the underbrush and the exposing of the soil to sun and winds. This, combined with the trampling down of the earth into a hard cement-like surface, impervious to the rain, gradually robs the trees of their necessary nourishment. In woodlots, given up to live stock, one may see the disastrous effects any day in dead tops and poorly nourished canopies.

Fire is a subtle foe to the woodlot and the careful proprietor takes no chances with it. A fire cannot be allowed to run through the leaves and underbrush scorching and killing the young shoots without cutting down the future dividends which that woodlot is expected to pay. Aside from the killing off of the young trees on which the life of the wood depends, underbrush fires frequently scorch the bark of the older trees sufficiently to kill the living tissue beneath it. While this may not show itself for some years, the bark will begin to drop off and then decay strikes at the wood. In one case, an examination was made of all trees in a woodlot over six inches in diameter and thirty per cent. of them were found decaying at the butt as a result of a fire running through the place several years before. In any event, whether the mature trees are touched or not, to destroy the leaves and twigs on the floor of a forest is to rob the trees of their fertilizer and to threaten their roots with drought. The consequences are not what a wise owner would invite.

It is unfortunately true that the condition of the average Canadian woodlot to-day is not what it might have been had our fathers and our grand-sires been as much alive to tree values as many farmers are in this generation. Too often the sound and vigorous trees were cut down and the inferior kinds, plus the over-mature and decaying, allowed to remain. Maple, ash, hickory, elm and pine have been thinned out. In their place have come poplar, willow, hawthorn, ironwood, hemlock and juniper. Unsound, broken, crooked trees should be removed, but only a few at a time, and their places taken by re-planting, otherwise brambles and grass may establish themselves.

Thinning of a woodlot must be done with great care. If too many trees are taken out at one time, and the borders of the lot be unprotected by branches and foliage the first windstorm may do tremendous damage.

In their youth, trees should be close enough together to force a rapid height-growth and produce clear trunks. When about five years old they should number from 3,000 to 5,000 per acre. This number will gradually diminish until at ten years of age the stand will contain from 1,500 to 3,000 trees and at maturity not more than 150 of the original trees will remain.

In regard to reproduction, if the woodlot is not very open and desirable species are present, it is best to let the trees themselves seed up the vacant spaces. Planting, however, is the best method of establishing a forest growth for woodlot purposes.

JAMES CARMSBY.

Canadian Forestry Association.



The Result of Burning.

Bark destroyed by burning over the ground in the woodlot. The tree will not through.

### The Awakening of a Country District.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

I wish that the readers of "The Farmer's Advocate" could visit a country district in one of the Eastern Provinces of Canada that has been transformed by one woman. There are about fifty families in the district, all farmers. This woman, who was brought up in the city and is a college graduate, married one of the young farmers of the place. After a time when the novelty of her new situation wore off she began in spite of herself to feel the monotony of her surroundings.

There was not one woman in the neighborhood with whom she could carry on a cultivated conversation. The talk of those who avoided gossip was restricted to the weather, the poultry and the ills of their children. The men and women simply ate and slept and the boys and girls sought the city as soon as they were able. Instead, however, of entering a futile complaint against her lonely lot she laid plans to bring the people together and to awaken in them a new interest in their work, their surroundings and in the world at large.

There was an old hall in the centre of the district that had been allowed to fall into disrepair. She invited a number of the younger men to her house and in the course of the evening suggested that it would be a good idea to repair the structure and make it fit for social gatherings. The suggestion was taken up without delay. The



Birch Planted Too Wide Apart.

This species produces little shade, and unless planted close will cause a grassy condition of the land.



An Ungrazed Woodlot.

Young trees growing well where no stock are allowed to pasture.