



Photos copyrighted by U. S. Rubber Co.  
The man in the foreground is inspecting the tree. It is his duty to see that the tappers do not wound the wood of the tree and that the proper "angle of cut" is maintained. If the cut is too near the horizontal, the latex spills over the bark instead of draining into the spout and then to the cup.

## The Story of the "Rubber Tire Tree"

What the automobile would be without rubber tires would be hard to imagine. Without rubber, some automobiles would undoubtedly be manufactured, but they would certainly be rattlebang affairs of slow speed and much vibration. It is quite true that following the invention of a successful engine, automobile development has been conditioned very largely upon the development of tires. This fact is amply demonstrated today, through the revolutionary changes taking place in motor truck construction due to the adaptation of the pneumatic tire to use on motor trucks, Germany had a chance to find out what automobile operation without rubber tires was like during the war, and she did not relish the experience.

It is the purpose of this article to show how it happened that when the automobile industry burst upon the world, with a need for rubber which the recognized sources of supply could not have begun to meet, there was found ready in a new quarter, a supply

so adequate that the progress of the industry has not been halted for a second by any shortage of rubber. In other words, this is the story of the rubber plantations in the Far East.

Until ten years ago, rubber meant rubber from Brazil. There were some other sources of supply of inferior grades, but practically all the prime rubber came from Brazil. Today Brazil's supremacy is gone. In less than a decade, the Far East has jumped to the front, and is now producing nine-tenths of the rubber of the world.

The history of the passing of the glory of Brazil in this particular, has a touch of romance in it. In the sixties an Englishman named H. A. Wickham spent much time in Brazil in the rubber field. He conceived the idea that the rubber trees which grow wild in Brazil could be cultivated and grown on plantations. But he was ahead of his time, and found little encouragement.