

One Way to Spend Arbor Day

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This circular letter sent out to the Nova Scotia Teachers in 1914 is worthy of our consideration this year. It is full of valuable suggestions. Do not miss a word of it.

PLANS for Arbor Day should be made well in advance of planting time. The date is not important. In fact all transplanting cannot properly be done at the same time. Instead of Arbor Day, how would it be to call it Improvement Day? It should not be confined to the school; but should reach the community. A provisional program might be somewhat as follows: In the forenoon, men and teams will work with the children in the school grounds. The teams will be needed to haul trees and shrubs from the woods, to haul a few loads of fertilizer and good soil, or to plow. Men will help dig the trees in the woods. The teacher will help in selecting suitable trees and shrubs. The holes on the school grounds should be dug before the trees arrive. If the day is fine and warm, the women could bring baskets and have a picnic lunch.

In the afternoon the children will assist the parents to clean up the home surroundings; and to plant trees, shrubs and flowers.

A public meeting in the school house in the evening would make a pleasing ending to the day's exercises. Here, the children will sing suitable songs; give readings; and exhibit their drawings and written descriptions of plant life. The resident clergymen and others interested in public affairs will address the children. Possibly this entertainment would be more effective if held the previous evening. It would then help create an enthusiasm for next day's work. The program should be varied. A few essays by the children on the value of trees—especially the bird-attracting kind—would impress the citizens with the value of nature work in the school. Arbor Day poems may be found in *Educational Journals*. Ten minute speeches from parents would do much to strengthen the children's interest.

On the school grounds, every child should plant something. Native trees and shrubs should predominate. Massed against the school buildings, such shrubs as Elder, Hazel-nut, Dog-wood, Mountain Ash, Hardhack, Wild Roses, Spruces and Hemlocks would do well. Spruce and Hemlock are suitable for the north side. So of course are many others. For this

situation choose shrubs that naturally like shade. Woodland ferns are good shade plants. Along the back fence, plant similar shrubs, together with a variety of our native trees. Sumac makes a good fence-corner clump. Don't be afraid of planting too close. Among the shrubs, have a good selection of fruit-bearing varieties that will attract birds. Wild Cherry, Indian Pear, Mountain Holly, Withe-rod, black-berries, dogwood, barberry and elder serve this purpose. A few imported shrubs are also advisable. All buildings should be generously covered with Virginia Creeper, Hop, Wild Cucumber, and Clematis. Against fences, plant Sweet Peas, climbing Nasturtiums, and Scarlet Runner Beans. Another year, after interest is awakened, other species should be introduced. Clumps of Lilacs, Snowballs, Flowing Currant, Barberry and other well known shrubs cost little. In fact, most of them can be obtained in the section.

Do not forget the flowers. Plant a bed of wild flowers, giving them somewhat natural conditions. Start a perennial border, using Hollyhocks, Foxgloves, Golden Glow, Larkspur, Iris, Columbine, etc. For the first year, mix with these such annuals as Cosmos, Chrysanthemums, Stocks, Snapdragon and Clarkia. These flowers are not the only good ones. They are named for those who have no idea what to plant. People who know anything about flowers will make their own selection. It is true that all these things cannot be planted on the general Arbor Day. That is all right. Do what you can on Arbor Day; and trust to the enthusiasm awakened then to get the other things planted at the proper time. Many trees can be transplanted early in May. Leave Evergreens, however, until about the first of June. Do not plant seeds too early.

The teacher would do well to associate with her two or three progressive men and women as an Arbor Day Committee. Good organization is necessary to produce the most good. The teacher who likes to do things can make this a success. Her pupils are ready to do things, too. Try it.

Frequently, teachers ask what they can plant for spring blooming. Many perennials will bloom before summer vacation. So will several annuals. Perennials do not bloom until the second year. Do not on that account, however, fail to sow—even if others will reap.

Following is a partial list of early flowering plants: Bulbs (tulips, jonquils, crocuses, etc.) Iceland Poppy, *Bellis perennis*, Columbine, *Careopsis*, Canterbury Bells, Sweet Alyssum, Candytuft, Forget-me-not, Oriental Poppy, Burbank Poppy, Sweet William, Foxglove, Corydalis, Anemone, Anchusa, Jacob's Lad-