

# Conservation

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## Education Direct to the Farmer

A provincial officer of the largest agricultural college in Canada has stated that some farmers who have gone past his institution for a lifetime are still farming after the methods of their fathers. Progress will be very slow until actual demonstration of the profitability of the improved dairy cow, of the spraying of fruit trees and of selecting seed, is driven home to the farmer on his own farm or to a local group of farmers. The problem is, for instance, to convince the dairyman, whose herd produces only 3,000 pounds of milk per cow per year, that, through selection, it may, in a few years, be producing 10,000 pounds and that without any additional labour.

In 1912, the Commission of Conservation, recognizing that the most effective results could be secured only by taking the instruction in improved methods of farming direct to the farmer, initiated illustration farms throughout Canada. These were conducted under the direction of the Lands Committee of the Commission for four years, when, having demonstrated their usefulness and the advisability of increasing their number, the work was transferred to the Department of Agriculture.

In the House of Commons, on May 14, Hon. Dr. Tolmie, Minister of Agriculture, in answering a question as to the extension of the system of illustration farms to Cape Breton, said: "These illustration farms are doing excellent work. An illustration farm operated under the management of an ordinary farmer, who is selected on account of his ability, and the suitability of his farm for the purpose. He works under the direction of our Experimental Farm Branch, he carries on the best system of rotation; he uses nothing but the best seed, and the farmers of his neighbourhood have an opportunity of profiting by the work that is carried on."

The Commission of Conservation is conducting community illustration work in the County of Dundas, Ont. The work has been carried on for four years, and the outstanding results have been secured, not only in crop increases and better farming methods, but also in improvement in education and opportunities for recreation and the development of social life throughout the County.

## The Commission of Conservation

The Commission of Conservation was created by an Act of Parliament to consider all questions relating to the better utilization of the natural resources of Canada, to make such inventories, collect and disseminate such information, and to frame such recommendations as seem conducive to that end.



TAKING THE ILLUSTRATION FARM TO THE FARMER

Neighbouring farmers listening to the Commission of Conservation's Agriculturist explaining results of comparative tillage methods on this Illustration Farm. They are in the field where the tests were made and see for themselves. Seeing is believing.

## Waste Paper Pays Vacation Expenses

Boy Scouts thus Obtain Funds to  
Finance Summer Camp

The enormous demand for paper-making materials is causing a drain upon the supply which threatens a very rapid depletion of our forest resources. With all the newsprint mills running to full capacity, some of our Canadian newspapers have had to suspend publication for lack of paper.

The Commission of Conservation has corresponded with paper mills and dealers and will gladly furnish information to any locality respecting the address of the nearest buyer of waste paper.

What the Boy Scouts of Brockville have done can be done by others. When they required funds for their summer outing, they undertook a paper-collecting campaign to raise the money.

Mr. A. J. Trail, Scoutmaster, Brockville, states that notices in the local press informed householders that the Boy Scouts would make a house-to-house canvass

for old newspapers and magazines in order to raise funds for the local branch and requested them to telephone Mr. Trail when the papers were ready for collection.

The collection was made during the Easter holidays. Three senior scouts were sent out with a horse and wagon. The papers were brought to Scout headquarters and the magazines and all smooth paper were separated from the newspapers. They were tied up in neat bundles and weighed, 10 or 12 at a time, on a small platform scale.

As a Toronto waste paper dealer quoted a satisfactory price, it was loaded on a car and shipped, collect freight, to Toronto.

Mr. Trail says: "We shipped 9½ tons of paper and received a cheque for \$325.44. Expense for twine, notices in press and cartage was \$36.85, giving to the Scout treasury net proceeds of \$288.59.

"We were 4 days in collecting and tying up paper and magazines, and about 6 hours in loading car. We did not bale any paper; the scrap paper left over we sold to a local junk dealer, receiving \$1.00 for it."

## Our Food Supply Depends on Birds

Do we appreciate our birds? The west is threatened with a grasshopper plague, while in the east the caterpillar is causing havoc among the trees.

Man, by his insatiable slaughter of the birds, has so reduced the balance of nature that the destructive insects are getting the upper hand. Dr. Tolmie, Minister of Agriculture, in introducing his estimates in the House of Commons on May 24, stated that Canada's annual loss from parasites amounted to \$125,000,000, and that in preparation for the expected grasshopper plague alone, there had been purchased 100,000 pounds of arsenic, 2,000 tons of bran and 50,000 gallons of molasses from which to make poisoned bait.

To overcome, or at least to minimize, the caterpillar plague, various methods of attack are being adopted, chiefly that of spraying.

Recently, a woodpecker was noticed at work upon a tree which was being defoliated by caterpillars. With the aid of binoculars, it was found that, in one visit to the tree, it secured twenty-four caterpillars. This bird, or another, returned at about quarterly intervals, each time disposing of a number of caterpillars.

Birds are the natural enemies of insects and bugs and, without them, we could not successfully combat the pests which destroy our food supplies.

By protecting the birds, we protect ourselves.

## Douglas Fir Railway Ties

During the war, Douglas fir railway ties were introduced on railways in the eastern United States but only as an emergency measure. Some authorities were dubious respecting the durability of this timber when used in the comparatively dry climate of the eastern states but, thus far, experience is largely favourable to its use for this purpose. The immediate result may be a demand for Douglas fir ties, particularly in view of the high prices now obtaining in the markets of eastern Canada and eastern United States for ties of hemlock, jackpine, etc.