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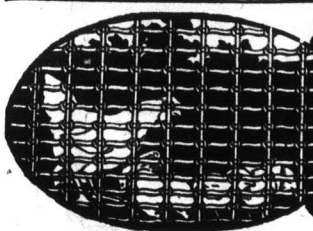
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Notes on Trees

Written for The Western Home Monthly by S. J. Wigley, Edgerton.

Trees are the largest members of the vegetable kingdom, and often live to a great age.

In temperate climates trees grow quickly in summer, very slowly or not at all in winter.

When a tree grows quickly it is safe to assume that soft wood is being formed. Slow growing trees make hard wood. In many trees the soft summer wood can be easily distinguished from the hard winter wood. The age of a tree can thus be told by counting the annual rings. In hot countries trees grow continuously, and their age cannot be told in this way.

Wood from this tree is used for making matches, and its charcoal in the manufacture of gunpowder. It is one of the cheapest kinds of wood in Canada, and when big enough is made into boards of snowy whiteness. As a pulp producing tree the aspen is second only to the spruce in Canadian wood industries.

The wood readily rots on the ground so the tree is almost useless for fencing. It makes excellent fuel, however, and for this reason is valued by Western farmers.

During the winter the blossom buds of all the poplar family are big and swollen. The catkins are ready to burst the first



Catkins of Poplar Aspen—(Populus tremuloides).

The growth of a tree takes place between the bark and the wood, and at the tips of the branches. Thus a tree grows in diameter only, and its branches grow longer and also in diameter.

The bark has to expand to accommodate this growth, and in doing this it often cracks into various patterns. A few trees, such as the Plane tree, shed their bark every year.

It is generally believed that sap rises from the roots ready to build up the growth of the tree. But the "mineral water" taken up by the roots passes first to the leaves and then in a changed state back to the growing parts of the tree. A hole made in the bark of a tree allows the sap to flow out. Some saps are very useful, and from them we obtain sugar, gum, rubber, rosin, etc. Sap causes a tree to rot, and winter is the best time therefore to cut timber in our forests.

The Aspen Poplar is a common tree in Western Canada. Its botanical name is Populus Tremuloides. It grows very rapidly, hence the wood is soft; it is also white, smooth, light when dry and porous.

warm days in spring, and by June the downy wind blown seed is seen in great abundance. The leaf buds are small, and do not open till the rising "sap" stirs them into life.

Other trees of the Poplar family are: Large-toothed Aspen (Populus Grandidentata), Black Poplar or Balm of Gilead (P. Balsamifera Cottonwood. (Populus Deltoides).

None of these trees live to a great age. Eighty or one hundred years seems to be the limit, for they are readily attacked by a disease called "pinks"—a fungus growth (polyporus ignarius), which causes them to rot.

During a football match in the North a spectator persisted in making loud remarks about the conduct of the referee. At last the official went up to him, and said:

"Look here, my man, I've been watching you for about the last fifteen minutes!"
"Ah thowt so," came the reply—"Ah thowt so! Ah knew varry weel tha wasn't watching t' game!"