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they will soon go.

TREES OF THE CITY

Being Destroyed by Too Much Pruning and Crowding.

W. E. Saunders on "The Planting, Care and Pruning of Trees."

Combined Meeting of the Horticultural and Entomological Societies—Brief Addresses by Prof. James of Toronto and Dr. Fletcher of Ottawa—Dr. Bethune's Motion.

The combined meeting of the Horticultural and Entomological Societies was held last evening in the lower audience room at the Normal School, which was completely filled with an interested audience. Besides the city members of the two societies and their friends, there were present from a distance: Prof. C. C. James, deputy minister of agriculture, Toronto; Dr. Thomas W. Rykes, South Quebec, president of the Entomological Society; Mr. H. B. Lyman, of Montreal, director and ex-president; Dr. J. Fletcher and Mr. Arthur Gibson, botanists and assistants, Experimental Farm, Ottawa; and Prof. Wm. Lockhead, O. A. C., Guelph. Prof. James took the chair and delivered an interesting address on the "Intellectual and Moral Influences of Horticulture," citing such prominent names as Parkman, Burroughs, Warner, Hazard, Blackmore and others, as being horticultural enthusiasts as well as eminent writers. Prof. James traced the gradual development of the farmer-citizens of Canada from their commencement, when they were merely grain growers, to the present, when their occupation is much diversified, and requires great intellectual effort, as well as manual effort, leading to the

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Introduction of the modern "nature studies" in our schools.

The chairman then called on Mr. W. E. Saunders, for an address on "The planting, care and pruning of trees in the parks and streets of our city." Mr. Saunders said:

The subject upon which I have to speak to you tonight is of great importance from every point of view, and while I only intend to touch upon certain phases, I feel sure the interest you have in the matter will lead you to follow it out in other lines also.

In nature, trees grow in one of two ways—either in a crowded forest, where they get plenty of light. Although light is free to all, yet among the trees it is the only necessary struggle, upon which their very lives depend. From once started, a tree cannot help getting a certain quantity of food and moisture, but unless it receives light also, it dies.

In the forest, trees grow as closely together as they can, and there is a constant struggle to reach the top; those that succeed in doing so will spread out, and by shading the lower ones, kill them just as surely as if they had been cut down with an axe. This method of growth shades the ground closely, keeping it damp and cool, and each year's crop of leaves serves to retain it as it falls the dead timber and bark which fell during the summer and preceding winter, and these, kept always damp by this much of leaves, soon decay, and with the leaves themselves form what we know as leaf-mould, the whole process being nature's method of making fertile soil. This is the normal forest condition, and the product of its development is timber, straight-grained, strong and nearly knot-free wood, the joy of the carpenter's heart and one of the best gifts of the Creator to man.

But once in a while, in natural conditions, and more often when the agency of man is involved, a tree gets a chance to grow in a place where there is an abundance of light, and what result do we find? This tree, instead of growing tall, as rapidly as possible, for fear that some competitor will cut off its supply of light, grows broad nearly as fast as it grows tall, and sometimes faster, all sides are covered with leaves, and all the branches beneath are draped with leaves in nature's own unequalled manner. Between these two styles of growth there is little resemblance; the shape is different, the leaves are all over, instead of merely at the top, while the wood, though equally good for burning, is so full of knots that it is nearly useless as lumber, but for beauty there is no comparison. The one shows nature in a creative mood, making soil and timber for the use of generations yet unborn; and the other shows her in an artistic mood, and the product is something whose beauty is rarely, if ever, equaled by the artifice of man. Scarcely can the dull-minded person pass a beautiful tree without wondering its need of admiration, and many of these growths are of such surpassing beauty that one is tempted to wonder if the Creator could possibly make anything finer, and yet so insignificant are the ways of some men that they cut, maul, disfigure and distort these gifts of God, and they appear to think that the Creator does not know how a tree should grow, and that it is their duty to teach Him.

In our parks and city streets trees are grown mainly for purposes of shade and beauty, and as the coolest and most dense shade is given by the most beautiful trees, namely, those that are

covered with leaves above, below and on all sides, it naturally follows that most of our city trees should be grown in this form. And there is but one way to grow them after this manner, and that is by giving them plenty of light, and keeping the trimming-knife at a distance.

In Victoria Park, young as it is, many trees are at this moment ugly and deformed by a want of observance of these conditions, light and trimming, and in fact one can see there some of the most striking examples of how not to grow a tree, that can be found in a long journey. But it seems invidious to single out Victoria Park, when one sees in any part of the city glaring examples of distrust in the Creator's good taste and ability to grow a tree properly.

Many people do their own pruning and do a good deal of it. The idea may not have occurred that the Creator really intended certain trees to grow in certain forms, and that no matter how they may be pruned, that form will always be the ultimate aim of the tree. They fail also to realize that the hand of God's omniscience, and that their best endeavors will only mar the perfection of beauty into which a tree would come if permitted to follow its natural bent.

Many of our trees are implanted deep in the nature of nearly every person. Many people do not realize this until they come into possession of a plot of land, where a few trees are growing, when their natural affection comes quickly to the surface. But few, however, have this feeling chastened with wisdom to enable them to treat their trees with nearly all want to grow two, three or even a dozen trees in the space that should be given to one, not realizing how much better it would be to have one fine, large, well-shaped, handsome tree, than to have half a dozen stunted, misshapen, lopsided ones, whose only real utility is for consumption as fuel. No better proof of this deeply implanted love can be offered than the fact that it is almost impossible to persuade the average man to part with a single one of his trees, even when the destruction of one means the betterment of the others.

Occasionally, however, one sees a tree, even in London, that has had unlimited chance to develop, and the owners of these grand trees declare they were without price; but these beautiful examples of God's power are all too few. The other extreme is everywhere, and perhaps the most flagrant case in London is in front of the College Institute. There stand three or four specimens of trees, and which is now, or has any prospect of being anything but an eyesore, and yet these trees are old enough and have enough nourishment from the soil and light from above to have made specimens as handsome as any in the city had they been given proper opportunity. They are now so far gone that it would be almost impossible to make a really fine tree out of a single one of them; and what has occurred here is in process of occurring all over, where from two to ten trees are planted in the space upon which one large, well-shaped tree would have sufficed. At irregular intervals a man, called by courtesy a "tree-pruner," more or less authorized by those who rule over us to butcher every inanimate object, travels from street to street, and makes a bad matter still worse.

A gentleman living near my house had last autumn a very handsome cut-leaved birch and a good many maples growing in his front lawn. Noticing that the birch was beginning to suffer from being crowded, I one day complimented him on the beauty of his tree, and suggested that it needed more room in order to retain its beauty. He replied that it was a very nice tree, but it needed pruning, and he was getting a man who understood such things to come and see to it. The beauty of this specimen of birch lies in the long, slender, drooping branches, and in the handsome pyramidal shape of the tree; but this "pruner" sawed off the trunk of this tree at about eight feet above the ground, and left one-third off all the larger limbs, and the tree shorn of all its beauty and with the work of years destroyed. All the tree needed was to receive plenty of light and to be left alone. Such examples are abundant.

I notice lately that the tree pruner is getting in his deadly work at Springbank also. Within the past year or two the poplars, poplars, maples, etc., near the pump-house have been cut from two to five feet taken off most of their branches, and from the trunk also. The object of this treatment is to make the trees look better, and in other parts of the grounds, one sees similar attention, and of all trees the spruce needs pruning least, and bears it worst. A pruned spruce is no longer a spruce, but an abortion, unlike anything in nature, and is fit only for the brushpile, for it will never be itself again.

When trees are too many, cut some out. A tree which is too large for its environment can never be made handsome by any amount of pruning, and not only that, but it will spoil others which might be ornamental if space were vacant.

Now, as regards the planting of shade trees. In London the planting of a superfluity of the silver maple (*Acer dasycarpum*). This is a quick-growing tree of handsome form, but there are many other trees as quick-growing, and many that are slow-growing, and more desirable and very handsome. Our streets should not all be planted with one kind of tree. Monetary saving is not the object, when a blighting disease, or a devastating insect, affecting possibly only one species of tree, reaches a city planted with that tree only, that place is liable to have very few good trees left. Some 25 years ago the streets of London had a great many locust trees, whose foliage and flowers are quite beautiful, but the locust borer came among them and now they are gone. The maple is a grand tree, hardy, and nobly beautiful, but the Creator has given us many other fine trees also, and doubtless it was never his intention that we should confine ourselves to the planting of one species only. The birches, three or four species of beautiful trees, immortalized in poetry and characteristic of the north, the lofty elm, whose fame as a street tree in few places ago has spread over the entire continent, the fragrant basswood, the evergreen spruces and cedar, the hemlock, which I sometimes think is the handsomest of all our trees, and the nut trees, chestnut, butternut, and the birds' nest hickories—all these and many more have beauties of their own, and should be largely used, particularly the nut class, which render the parks attractive to the stroller and the birds and the children; and is it not for the children, particularly those of the poorer people, for whose use the parks should mainly exist? I have no patience with the park regulations which say to the children, "Keep Off the Grass." Rather let them say, "Don't destroy it, but enjoy it in every possible way." I hope we will see this principle recognized.

Beauty in the streets and parks is an asset, and should be well looked after, as it is perhaps the greatest attraction of a city, next to a low tax rate, and although we have many thousands of spoiled, ugly trees,

fit only for the woodpile, yet there are thousands more growing up, and intelligent care can prevent most of them from following the example set by their elders.

These points on which I have touched affect not only our own city, but almost every city and town in our country, and the need for intelligent care is urgent.

It was only a few weeks ago that an eminent horticulturist wrote in the pages of *the Gardener*, a leading American magazine, of the folly of planting trees in rows along the drives in parks, a method which is the worst possible, for besides spoiling the artistic appearance of the place, it prevents the people on the drives from the realization and enjoyment of the beauties of either the nearby or the distant view; and yet, despite the fact that this principle is freely stated and admitted by the best authorities, it is the very method which is now being adopted in our river park, which is now in process of formation; and not only that, but the chief part of the trees planted have been soft maples and Norway spruces, the very ones of which Londoners have already far too many. It is to be hoped that ere long different methods may prevail, and that while there is yet time the best may be made of the material now planted, and that the future may be properly provided for by the planting of such trees as will lend variety and beauty to the landscape. How this is to be accomplished is not difficult to tell, for it can only be done by placing the control of such matters in the hands of men who have given thought and study to the subject. Were our own city council, for instance, to appoint for 1901 a committee consisting of a few such men, and give them a free hand on the matter, the effect on the appearance of our city parks and streets would be great and lasting.

I have not touched upon the matter of shrubs and flowering plants, but it would be easy to make a grand improvement over present conditions were the plan above mentioned to come into action, and no plan would be complete that did not aim at the results in these points, as well as others; but a shrub may be at its best in five or ten years, a tree is the growth of decades, and neglect for ten years may ruin the result of 25 years careful work and thought.

The room having been darkened, Dr. Fletcher, of Ottawa, well and favorably known to Londoners, gave an address illustrated by many beautiful magic lantern slides, taking up first the various examples of specimens of trees and shrubs as grown at the Experimental Farm, as illustrating some of the points made by the previous speaker, whose paper he commended to the serious consideration of our citizens; and then turning to entomological subjects, he showed many slides of the most destructive insects, giving a short sketch of the life history of each, together with appropriate remedies to check or annul their ravages.

A short discussion on the address given was then held, and it being evident that the opinion of the meeting was that some steps should be taken to improve the state of our city's trees, it was moved by Dr. Bethune "That this meeting of the Horticultural and Entomological Societies indorses the idea that the control of the city's horticulture should be in the hands of men who have made this science a study; and that this meeting urges upon the city council the advisability of placing in the hands of a small committee of citizens the entire control of the shade trees on the streets and in the parks of London, believing that in this way only can the best results be accomplished, and that the secretaries of the two societies are hereby instructed to send copies of this resolution to the mayor and the city clerk early in January, 1901, asking that it be brought before the council at the earliest possible moment, and requesting that action be taken thereon."

This motion was seconded by Mr. George B. Kirk, who heartily approved of the paper read by Mr. Saunders, and felt that it was high time some such steps should be taken. The motion was carried unanimously.

During the evening the proceedings were interspersed with choice music, and a fine vocal solo by Miss Murphy, pianist, and Mrs. Edna S. Robb, soprano, to whom a vote of thanks was tendered for their artistic services.

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