

most every town and village in the country. In many Ontario towns cement has almost entirely replaced the old wooden walks during the past ten years.

2. Accompanying the laying of permanent walks has come the removal of street fences. In many up-to-date Ontario towns and cities we may now go block after block on the residential streets and see no fences, either in front or between lots.

3. Immediately following the removal of fences has come the proper grading of the lawns and boulevards to the line of the pavement, and more attention to keeping the grass nicely cut.

A prominent citizen of Woodstock told me that it was not many years ago that he owned the only lawn mower in the town. Now it would be hard to find the citizens who did not own and use one regularly.

4. In some places where systematic tree planning has been done along the boulevards there are now fine avenues of street trees. But just here is where so many towns have been spoiled because the street planting has been left to the individual property owners, no two of whom have the same idea of what kind of trees should be planted, or where they should be placed on the boulevard. This has rendered it impossible to make a uniform continuous row of trees, because of the great variety selected and the haphazard method of their arrangement.

The street planting and care of the trees in every village, town and city should be under the management of a Park Board or Commission, which can adopt a definite plan for the regular planting of certain kinds of trees on certain streets and see that they are properly cared for.

5. In a number of our cities and most progressive towns, Park Boards or Commissions have been appointed, as provided for by the Ontario Parks' Act. This means that much greater progress will be made in such places, and other places will wake up to the necessity of similar action.

Within the last few years many of our Ontario towns and villages, to say nothing of the larger cities, have seen the advisability of making park reservations, and have purchased lands for park purposes. In some cases, the development of these has been undertaken by the town council and in others by a Park Board; but experience has proved that greater continuity of action may be expected from a Board or Commission which is more or less permanent.

Evidences of progress in the establishment of parks may be seen in such places as Ottawa, Brockville, Hawke, Toronto, Brampton, Hamilton, Galt, Guelph, Berlin, Waterloo, Woodstock, Stratford, Barrie, Orillia, London, Leamington, and no doubt many other places which I cannot now mention.

For a town of its size, I know of no place making greater progress in the establishment of beautiful parks than the town of Galt. It has now three good sized parks and seven or eight small plots and squares about the town which help to make Galt a "town beautiful."

In some places the local Board of Trade has taken the initiative in promoting civic improvement, because they realize the fact that beautiful surroundings are a potent factor in attracting citizens and increasing trade. The Orillia Board of Trade, a couple of years ago published a neat little booklet encouraging the citizens to unite in making Orillia an attractive spot for summer visitors.

In some places the local Horticultural Societies have taken an active part in promoting civic and rural improvement, particularly along horticultural lines. In

other places the work has been confined too much to a few special features of improvement, such as floriculture or window gardening. Such societies should be encouraged to reach out and take a broader view of their opportunities. I would suggest the following as a few of the avenues through which the local societies might work to good advantage in promoting improvement in their respective communities.

1. By conducting an educative campaign in awakening public interest to an appreciation of the value of neatness, order, and beautiful surroundings. To this end it is well to make good use of the local press.

2. By enlisting the support of the rising generation by flower competitions, and also by making school as well as home surroundings as beautiful as possible. Young people brought up amid beautiful surroundings may be counted on in later years to work for rural and civic improvement wherever they may be placed. I am looking forward to an early awakening of School Boards to the importance of improving school grounds, and have prepared a bulletin on that subject for the Department of Education, this year.

3. By seeking the co-operation of other influential local organizations, such as the Town Council, Board of Trade, or School Board, which may be willing to assist in making local improvements. In union is strength.

4. By working for the appointment of progressive local Park Boards or Commissions, and urging such Boards to get possession of suitable lands for park purposes while they are cheap. Plans can then be adopted for their gradual development and improvement.

The Ontario Parks' Act provides that one-half mill on the assessment may be used by any Park Board so appointed for such purposes. And whenever such money is judiciously expended, the increased value of adjacent lands will soon pay a good share of the cost of such improvements in increased revenue from taxes.

The Park Board in any town might also be asked to establish a small nursery, where trees, shrubs, and vines could be grown in quantity for civic improvement work, and could be supplied to the citizens at cost for planting in their own grounds.

5. Every property holder should be encouraged by precept and example to contribute his share to the general improvement of the place by making his own lot as attractive as possible. If every citizen did his share, what a change would take place in the appearance of our country. Tourists from all over the world would come to see Beautiful Ontario.

There are a few things upon which it would be desirable to have some legislation in this country, and which this Association might be instrumental in getting, if it were to join forces with other organizations which have been asking for the same:

1. Legislation to control the bill board nuisance and advertising monstrosities which disfigure architectural beauty as well as natural scenery.

2. To prohibit the butchery of street and roadside trees by telephone and telegraph companies, and compel the placing of their wires underground wherever they enter town or city limits.

3. To prevent dogs running at large within town or city limits.

There may be room for diversity of opinion upon all of these questions, but there can be no two opinions about it, that dogs and bill boards and unsightly telegraph and telephone poles are at enmity with civic improvement.