CATALPA FOR PROFIT---MARKETABLE TREES IN TEN YEARS---TIMBER PRICES RAPIDLY INCREASING

Timber Supply Decreasing---Those in Position to Supply the Demand Reap Substantial Reward--- Culture and Possible Profits Per Acre

Catalpa Speciosa, three years old.

SEVERAL readers in different parts of the country have asked if raising catalpa trees is profitable. The question was put to the largest grower of catalpa trees and his reply is: "There have been many failures in catalpa growing, but they are traceable to neglect of the trees the first two years or to planting the scrub variety."

A few years ago an enterprising Ohio farmer planted catalpa trees on 100 acres of rich farming land, convinced that the trees would yield a larger profit than ordinary farming, though it takes ten years for the trees to grow to marketable size.

He first travelled many miles investigating various aged plantings, growing on all kinds of soil and under varying conditions. He made a study of the trees, so he knew approximately how much timber could be grown on an acre of ground in a given time. Timber and lumber of all grades have been increasing in value for years, and more noticeably during the past five years. Our population and their needs grow each year, while the timber supply is decreasing more rapidly each year. Naturally when a commodity of common use and necessity like wood becomes scarce and high priced, those in a position to supply the demand are likely to reap substantial financial reward.

Catalpa speciosa is the variety to plant for timber and the planter should be sure that he has this variety when planting. It makes a quick growth, adding nearly an inch in thickness every year. In Southern States it will do even better than this. It is a handsome wood for interior house finishing and for furniture and it takes the place of oak and hickory for carriage makers' uses on account of its lightness and toughness. For uses in the ground it is said to be equal to black locust in resisting decay. For telephone and telegraph poles its strength and durability place it in a class by itself. For any use where strength, lightness, durability, beauty of finish and capacity to hold its place without warping or checking, those in authority say it is unexcelled. A tree in Woodstock, Ohio, nineteen years old measured twenty-one inches in diameter and fifty feet high.

The International Society of Arboriculture made an exhibit at the World's Fair at St. Louis of catalpa wood, showing piles of railway ties taken from the tracks of the Illinois Southern Railroad that had been in use for thirty-two years, and they were sound and free from decay. There were fence posts from an old fence in southern Illinois that had been in the ground for eighty-five years. Furniture of all kinds was shown made from catalpa and it compared favorably with the finest work made from the various common woods used for furniture.

The Ohio Experimental Station made an investigation of some of the older groves of catalpa trees in Ohio and the report shows that the Lemar grove made more than three thousand fence posts per acre at twenty-three years' growth. These posts were worth 20 cents each at wholesale, making the value of the timber $600 per acre, but the report says that this grove was never properly pruned nor thinned out as it should have been. Had the trees been properly cared for the return would have been equally large and possibly larger at twenty years, so the return would have been $30 per acre for each year the trees were growing, with little labor and no worry about hired help or getting the crop in each year.

The protecting influences from the cold winter winds afforded by a small grove of trees are remarkable and every farm large enough should have a sheltering belt of timber. With the protecting trees the birds will come and they are the farmers' and gardeners' best friends.

Soil and Planting.

Soil that will grow any farm crop will grow catalpa trees, and soil that is too poor to produce farm crops will sometimes grow catalpa. Rich soil will grow trees more rapidly than poor soil.

Plough the land and harrow it the same as for any other farm crop. Then mark the ground each way, at the distance the trees are to be planted with any kind of a drag that will leave a plain mark. This leaves a cross mark showing where the trees are to be planted. Sink a spade eight or ten inches deep, working it back and forth until the ground is opened sufficiently to admit dropping the tree in at least as deep as it grew in the nursery.

Before planting the tree trim off all the large roots to within two or three inches of the main root; also clip off the end of the tap root, if there is one, as a fresh cut root will start its new growth quicker than one not clipped.

Do not set the tree more than one inch deeper than it grew in the nursery and when the tree is in place rake in loose dirt and tramp firmly, or pound the dirt solidly around the tree.

When the trees are set in wood lots or in sod dig up the sod for a square foot with a spade and set the tree the same as in ploughed ground, and if possible mulch the tree with a couple of forkfuls of coarse manure.

Distance to Plant.

The distance to plant will depend largely on soil and moisture conditions. The aim should be to plant the trees as thickly as they can be planted to grow to post size without overcrowding. On rich and fertile land trees will grow to post size planted as closely as 5x8 feet. On soils not so good 6x8 or 6x9 feet will be better. Eight or nine feet apart one way will permit a wagon to be driven between the rows, and this is convenient when the time comes to thin the trees out.

Cultivation.

Catalpa trees will repay good cultivation. To get the best growth the trees must be cultivated for at least two years, the object being to prevent weeds and grass from robbing the trees of nourishment. This cultivation should be kept up until the trees are large enough to completely shade the ground, thus preventing the weeds and grass from growing. The trees may be planted as soon as the frost is out of the ground in the spring and up to the middle of May.

Be careful not to buy trees from any other than reliable nurserymen with an absolute guarantee in writing that they are the true Catalpa speciosa. Many trees have been sold in the past few years for speciosa which have turned out to be scrub or hybrid trees and practically worthless.

Vigorous, thrifty one-year-old trees are best to plant. Trees that have been stunted or that have made a weak and spindling growth are not good.

Immediate effect produced by planting large trees.

Pruning.

Catalpa trees generally grow so late in the fall in the nursery that the first heavy frosts kill the tops of the trees. When they are set out in the spring the top should be cut back to where the best sprouts start out, and all the buds below this rubbed off. This is important to get the tree started to grow tall and straight. The best time to do this is after the tree has started all its buds nicely. Go through the trees once each spring, rubbing off or cutting off with a sharp knife all side shoots that have started. One man can prune in this way from two to four acres per day.

Possible Profits.

The only manner of estimating possible profits is by records of the past.

The Lemar grove is twenty-three years old and the measurements of the trees show that it would make 3,396 posts per acre, at 18 cents each. This would make the value of the trees $611.28 per acre, or over $26 for each year the trees have been growing.

The catalpa tree is one of the hardiest and easiest to transplant of all our common trees and any one who goes about it intelligently can grow beautiful trees.

The United States Bureau of Forestry says that "we are dangerously near a hardwood famine that will strike at the very foundation of some of our country's most important industries." The solution may be in having our farmers plant Catalpa speciosa.

PLANTING BIG TREES.

Not many years ago the man who built a substantial home was obliged to plant comparatively small trees and wait for them to develop to perfect the work of the landscape gardener. Beautiful results are secured by this method and at a minimum expense.

Only within the past few years has it been possible to successfully transplant large trees. Now people who build new homes and are willing to pay the price can have their grounds planted with large trees and shrubs, securing immediate effects formerly obtained only by years of waiting.

A witty Irishman, sentenced to be hanged, asked the Judge if he would grant the last request of a doomed man. Touched by the appeal the Judge consented and instructed the prisoner to make his request. "Your Honor," was the reply, "may I choose the kind of tree I am to be hung on?" A trifling matter of this kind was not to be denied. "Well, then," said Pat, "I'll be hung on a gooseberry bush."

"But there are no gooseberry bushes large enough," responded the vexed Judge. "Well, then," retorted Pat, "I'll wait till they grow." That was a case where there was a willing waiter, but many people want their homes and surrounding grounds completed with as little delay as possible, and this can be accomplished now by planting large, well developed trees and shrubs, giving immediate complete effects.

Seeing the possibilities in moving large trees and successfully transplanting them, a young man undertook this work a few years ago, a pioneer in his field.

Henry Hicks of Westbury, L. I., N. Y., of I. Hicks & Son, was the first to attempt this work and he has achieved success. The Hicks Nursery is equipped with tackle of all sizes, specially constructed trucks of great dimensions and traction engines that haul them about the country, delivering the trees in this manner. Large trees are also shipped on flat cars. Hundreds of big trees are shipped every season from this nursery, and many satisfied customers testify to Henry Hicks's ability to move big trees and make them grow.

SEEDS THAT MAY STILL BE SOWN

Now is the time to sow the seeds of hardy perennials of all kinds to obtain strong plants that will bloom freely next year. These may be sown later in the season, but the sooner the work is done the larger the plants will grow and the easier will be their culture. These plants last from year to year, merely dying down in the autumn, and reappear the following spring. Delphiniums, pyrethrums, carnations, hollyhocks, feverfew, gaillardia and phlox are favorites in this class. Digitalis, sweet william, canterbury bell and wallflower are biennials, completing their life cycle in the second year from germination. Sown one year they bloom and ripen their seed the next.

All the above are subjects for next year's display. Annuals may still be sown where they are to flower the coming summer.

Vegetables.

In the open ground may be planted now beets, beans, Brussels sprouts, carrot, cauliflower, celery, sweet corn, cress, cucumber, melon, onion, parsnip, peas, potatoes, radish, salsify, spinach, turnip and all the herbs; bean, corn, cucumber, melon, peas, radish and lettuce to be followed by plantings later for a succession of crops to keep the table suplied with fresh and tender vegetables.

SWEET SULTANS.

For easily cultivated, fragrant flowers with long, stiff stems, there is nothing more beautiful than annual sweet Sultans for table decoration. They are quite hardy and require no coddling, nor is it necessary to sow them under glass or in pots. Give a sunny location and liquid manure when the plants are coming into bloom. When cut the flowers last for several days in good condition. The colors are brilliant rose, dark rose, deep lavendar, deep purple, lilac and pure white. These can be had in packets of separate colors or all six colors mixed.

Constance, a new rose recently introduced in England, has large and handsome flowers of deep apricot yellow when half open, splashed with red on the back of some of the outer petals. The Royal Horticultural Society voted it an award of merit. It will probably be offered by American florists next year.

DARWIN TULIPS.

Do not disturb Darwin tulips when they are through flowering. Let them remain where they are growing and next season they will come up larger and stronger, and will multiply until finally the bed will become so crowded that it will be necessary to take them up and separate the bulbs, replanting them so they will have sufficient room. After a while this operation will have to be repeated.

When they are better known Darwin tulips will be more generally used than they are at present.

PLANTS FOR SANDY SOIL.

Liatrix, blazing star or gay feather is a capital plant for sandy soils, although it does well in any good soil. It is a native hardy perennial with long spikes of purple and rosy purple flowers, blooming from July to September, growing three to four feet high. Seeds may be sown now.

Other good plants for sandy soils are phlox, verbenas and asters. These are all annuals and will flower this season from seeds planted now. All these do particularly well in sandy soil.

PHLOX FOR THE GREENHOUSE.

Perennial phlox makes splendid pot plants for the greenhouse when treated after the manner of chrysanthemums. Make cuttings as soon as the shoots are about two inches long. Root them in small pots, moving them along into six inch pots and when these are filled with roots feed with liquid manure. For potting soil use good loam two parts and well rotted manure one part. Grow the plants outside, with the pots plunged to the rim in earth. Only put them in the greenhouse to finish. Water liberally throughout the summer.

GARDENING PROBLEMS.

Mrs. H. L. B., Newark, N. J.—Seeds of Lilac Queen, sweet alyssum, with gentian blue colored flowers, can be obtained of Henry A. Dreer, 714 Chestnut street, Philadelphia.

Mrs. T. D., Scranton, Pa.—Plants of Perennial Sweet Peas can be purchased of the Palisades Nurseries, Sparkill, N. Y.

L. A. C., Geneseo, N. Y.—In different parts of the country plants have different common names, and it is therefore difficult to classify a plant from its common name alone. Snow-on-the mountain in England is arabis, used in rockeries and mixed borders. The plant you describe is Euphorbia marginata, a hardy perennial with variegated foliage. It grows wild in some Western and Southern States, Minnesota to Missouri, in Texas, Colorado and South Carolina, spreading eastward to Ohio. It is called snow-on-the-mountain and is very useful in perennial borders.

L. A. C., East Orange.—Diamond brand compost can be used at frequent intervals all summer long on your lawn and will produce prolific growth. It can be used freely to good advantage in both the flower and vegetable garden as a top dressing. Spread thinly over the top of the soil and rake it under. Any seedsman can supply it.

While the weather remains favorable make good all shortcomings of planting and sowing. Seeds may still be sown with good results in the open ground. Trees and shrubs can still be moved, also hardy perennial plants. The trees and shrubs will require careful attention subsequently, giving them an overhead shower bath from time to time, as well as soaking the roots thoroughly.

Where there is plenty of old manure to be had it should be used as a mulch on the soil above the roots of the trees or shrubs, spreading it over a space of two or three feet around the trees.

Catalpa speciosa tree fifty feet to the first branch.

Moving a large tree.

MAINE POTATOES QUARANTINED.

A quarantine against Maine potatoes, effective August 1 next, has been declared by the United States Department of Agriculture. On account of the prevalence of powdery scab in that State the Federal Government will now take charge of the work of preventing the spread of the disease.

WATER LILIES.

The early summer months are best for planting water lilies. A half barrel makes a good lily tub. Place six inches of good rich soil in the bottom of the tub and mix a little charcoal with it. Spread out the roots of the lilies carefully, covering them with three inches of soil, on top of which place two or three small, flat stones and fill with water.

Hardy water lilies only require a top dressing of loam once a year and lifting, trimming and replanting every third year. If the tubs are sunk in the ground they should be filled with water late in the autumn and after the first few frosts, when the leaves show that the plants have stopped growing, cover the tub with boards and cover these with a good coating of leaves. A foot of leaves is sufficient in the latitude of New York city. On the leaves spread fresh manure lightly to keep the leaves from blowing away. This will keep the plants in perfect condition until spring. In colder sections dig up the roots and bury them in the ground, two feet deep, in sand or sandy soil and cover the surface with leaves.

TRADE NOTES.

There will be an exhibition of individual gardens in miniature by the Gardencraft Toy Company at the Craftsman Building, Thirty-eighth and Thirty-ninth streets, near Fifth avenue, this week. Models will be shown of the gardens of several prominent artists and authors.

With the Gardencraft toys miniature gardens can be laid out, and a gardener can then reproduce the design, life size. In this way the designer can make a picture and see just how the garden will look when completed. The Gardencraft toys are amusing for children and have become very popular. They were produced originally as an aid to gardeners rather than for playthings.

Dodson's bird houses are now exhibited at the Craftsman Building, Thirty-eighth and Thirty-ninth streets.

The Temple Pump Company of Chicago makes gasolene and kerosene engines of the popular type and also the Master Workman, an inverted vertical engine that seems to be one of the best styles ever offered in gas engines. It is small, compact and easy to handle. The steadiness of motion gives added power and saves fuel and starts as readily in zero weather as in summer when provided with a zero weather starter. These engines do all classes of work satisfactorily, pumping, threshing, drilling, sawing or for any purpose where power is required, and being portable adds greatly to their value.

A good garden fertilizer made from nitrate of soda, ground bone, sulphate of potash and acid phosphate is offered in small convenient packages from one pound to one hundred pounds by prepaid express. This is applied at the rate of ten pounds for 750 square feet. It can be applied shortly after seeds have been planted and again about three weeks later. Water thoroughly after each application. Supplied by the Nitrate Agencies, 102 Pearl street, New York.

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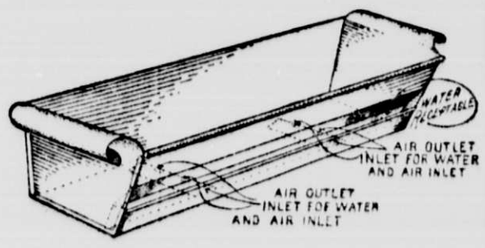

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