

ECONOMICAL AFFORESTATION IN NELSON.

THE FRUIT-CASE TIMBER SUPPLY.

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How to utilize waste lands is a subject which interests many farmers. As far as we Nelson farmers are concerned—especially those on the newly broken-in country—the question is of pressing importance. High land-values are the rule, and on almost every farm there is more or less waste land which is too poor to grow grass and too steep or otherwise broken to be used for orchards. On small farms it is of the utmost importance that this land should do its bit towards keeping the family pot boiling. The remedy suggested by the writer is afforestation. The purpose of this article is to show how cheaply and easily this can be accomplished, how certain are the results, and great the ultimate profits.

An average fruitgrower uses as much timber to market his crop annually as would build him a fair-sized house. There is, roughly, equal to 4 ft. of timber in an imperial standard case. A grower with 15 to 20 acres of orchard would have perhaps four thousand to five thousand cases of fruit. Thus his annual consumption of timber for cases alone would amount to 16,000 ft. to 20,000 ft., or sufficient to build an eight- or ten-roomed house. It does not require a very vivid imagination to gain some idea as to the quantity of case material we shall require in the immediate future. I think it would be quite safe to say that the amount of land employed in growing apples would require to be exceeded by that growing apple-cases.

PINUS INSIGNIS THE TREE.

Bearing these facts in mind I set out to experiment several years ago. I have had all sorts of timber cut into cases, including willow, Lombardy poplar, birch, and *Pinus insignis (radiata)*. They all do at a pinch, but have certain drawbacks. Willow is too inclined to warp, and there is also trouble in getting timber of requisite size and straightness. Poplar is fair, but there is a big waste in cutting the timber owing to the deep flanges on the trees, also the timber is rather soft, which makes it difficult to get the nails to hold. Birch is too heavy and apt to split. Now that white-pine is practically exhausted, undoubtedly *Pinus insignis* is the timber for cases. The