

TREES CAN'T BREATHE SMOKE AND LIVE

Trees can not breathe smoke and be healthy.

Away from the fresh winds of the great open spaces they droop and die like country maidens.

Such has been the experience, at least, of the St. Louis municipal park department. Efforts to establish trees within the smoke area created by the industries of the city, which includes some of the most prominent public buildings, are proving failures.

Sycamores and poplars, supposedly smoke resistant, succumb within two or three years. The only tree which seems to thrive in such localities, a veritable child of the slums as it were, is the Tree-of-Heaven, or Ailanthus.

Shrubs show much the same tendency. Privet has proved the most resistant - but even this is dying out. Lilacs, when they live, seldom bloom. Blue grass lawns are impossible except for a short period in spring.

Evergreens have proved unable to endure the smoke. Trees that formerly flourished are dying as the smoke area is extended. The oaks in one of the principal city parks are dying rapidly, indicating that the smoke has reached them, although it is not noticeable otherwise.

The St. Louis officials have decided that, after all, the city is no plan for healthy shrubs.

GERMAN ACID TREATMENT IMPROVES COTTON CLOTH

At a meeting of leading German industrial chemists a discovery was announced that is expected to have far-reaching effects in all branches of cotton manufacture. The essential step in the process is a treatment of the cotton in highly concentrated nitric acid. This causes the fibers to contract and curl up, so that they come to resemble wool both in appearance and in their lowered heat conductivity. At the same time there is a gain in coloring properties, tensile strength and elasticity. It is claimed that after the acid has been removed no detrimental effects remain. One large cotton-spinning and dyeing concern in Germany is already making a large-scale application of the new process.

SEES FUTURE FACTORIES GROWING OWN FUEL

Does the photo-electric process of accelerating plant growth contain the answer to the future power and fuel problems of the world?

No less an engineer than E. W. Rice, jr., honorary chairman of the directors of the General Electric Co., raised this question in an address before the World Power Conference in London recently.

In other words, is there a prospect of industry creating forests fast enough to supply its furnaces?