



OFFICE TREE—Do-it-yourself Christmas trees from the Oregon Beauty Christmas Tree company, Grants Pass, are winning eastern admirers. Above, Rep. Charles O. Porter and Stanley H. Shafer, merchandise manager of Montgomery Ward and Company, Baltimore, Md., are shown building one of them for display in Porter's Washington office. Each tree has 46 fir boughs which can be placed into holes in the trunk.

Editorial Comment

ADVICE FROM A BEAVER

By Charles V. Stanton
Editor, Roseburg News-Review
Confronting me on my desk is a trophy of which I am inordinately proud. It is a "Beaver" awarded by the Oregon Division of the Izaak Walton League of America. It is one of four such awards for conservation work made at the Division's annual convention in Eugene last week.

This award is something new. The four given this year were the first to be presented by the League. It is the hope of the Oregon Division that its "Beaver" can be made synonymous in the conservation field with the famed "Oscar" of the motion picture industry.

The trophy is a handsome thing. It has a base of beautiful wood, about four and one-half inches high, faced with an engraved bronze plaque. Resting on this base is the figure of a beaver, sitting erect, flat tail stretched out behind him.

He is a perky little fellow. As he sits looking at me, it seems he is talking to me.

THE BEAVER'S MESSAGE

I seem to hear him say: "You've been given an award for conservation! What do you know about conservation, you big sap?"

"You're looking at someone who knows something about that subject. For generations my people have known how to store water. We know how to keep topsoil in its place. We kept the forest green by furnishing it with water."

"Of course, there are people who hate our guts. If we cut down an apple tree to use for storing more water and keeping the farmer's fields green, he wants us killed or removed."

"You'll learn, Bud, that you can't cut down apple trees. People don't like to have a bite taken out of their pocketbooks. . . ."

"What have you and your people done for conservation?"

"You have moved from the Atlantic Coast to the Pacific. As you moved you stripped the forests from the hills. You destroyed my storage dams. You let the topsoil be washed away. You filled the streams with your filth. You killed the fish and the birds."

"Now you haven't enough water to drink. You can't supply your industries with the water they need. You have had to abandon millions of acres of your farm lands. You watch the wind blowing dust from once fertile acres."

"I took care of those lands for centuries until you came along. But some of your people thought more about a fast buck than they did about preserving the soil, the water and the forests for their children and their grandchildren. So they hunted me and my people. They used our fur for their adornment. They cut our numbers down to the point where we now are too few to do much of a job for you in spite of the fact we keep busy all the time."

PERSEVERANCE ESSENTIAL

These are some of the things my little "Beaver" seems to be saying, as he sits there with his nose upturned, sniffing the vagrant breeze for scents of danger, his ears sharply attuned to the news of his environment.

Then he goes on: "You see this broad tail of mine? Well, when I scent danger I slap it on the water. That's a signal for everything in hearing to take cover. But I can't make anyone protect himself. All I can do is warn him. If he gets his tail chewed, because he didn't listen, there's nothing I can do about it."

"My people had to learn the hard way. And that's the way you and your people are going to have to learn."

"It's a matter of perseverance. Your people tear out my dams. So I set about rebuilding them! Then they get mad. They trap me in a wire cage and carry me many miles away. But I come back. Maybe I must travel until my feet are torn and bloody, until I am exhausted. But I come back and rebuild my dam. Your people can't understand what I'm trying to do for them, and they don't do anything for themselves."

"You get an award for conservation! That's a laugh! "But we've got a lot of things in common. We can warn people but we can't make them protect themselves. We take a cussing when we cut down an apple tree. We recognize the need for perseverance."

"But I've got something on you, Bud. Always remember this—listen closely: "No one ever wants you to be a high hat."

(First printed in December, 1953.)

Last year's sales of greeting cards with sentiments ranging from anniversary good wishes to hangover condolences totaled nearly five billion. The retail value of this mountain of sentiment was about \$550 million.



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