

TREES USED BY THE PIONEERS. THE early white settlers probably learned something of the uses of basswood fiber from the Indians, and they employed it in a similar way for cord and rope until it was superceded by hemp and cotton fibers. The tree is also much esteemed by bee keepers, because of the excellent honey furnished by the flowers, and in some parts of the south it is locally called bee-tree. The easily worked wood was used for many purposes, including bowls for kitchen use. And because of the fact that it bends readily, it was generally employed in making ox-yokes.

Although the early settlers in the heavily forested parts of the country were prone to have little respect for trees and to regard the forest rather as an enemy to be overcome than as a friend, they were, nevertheless, dependent upon it for supplying many of their needs. Besides furnishing them fuel and shelter, they drew upon it for material for fences, furniture and many necessary implements and useful articles. It contributed directly, though only in a minor way, to the food supply, but as a shelter for game and as a hunting ground it was even more important.

The oaks and other hard woods furnished logs for the cabin walls and clapboards for the roof. The wood of the shingle oak (*Quercus imbricaria*) was particularly valued for the latter purpose, because of its straight grain that split readily under the mallet and flail. The bark of the black oak (*Quercus velutina*) was valued most highly by the tanner for converting hides into leather. Hickory was the favorite fuel wood, and it also furnished the best material for axe and other tool handles as well as for wagon timber. Hickory chips burned slowly in the smoke-house, were also reputed to impart an exceptionally good flavor to bacon and hams. Rope and coarse twine were also sometimes made from the inner bark of the hickory, and we read of hickory "galluses" doing duty in men's apparel, but they scarcely convey an impression either of comfort or security. The tough bark of the leather-wood, where it was found, was probably a much better material for such purposes. Black walnut was so common in many parts of the Middle-west that in addition to its wood being employed in house building and in the earliest cabinet making, millions of feet of the finest logs were split up into fence rails and posts. This tree and the butternut also furnished the pioneer wives with a dark brown dye for coloring homespun cloth. This was made from a solution of the hulls surrounding the nuts, and if anyone doubts its effectiveness or lasting qualities, it can be easily tested by handling and hulling the freshly



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