

How to Handle Furs.

The following directions for fur collectors and trappers have been issued in circular form by Carscaden & Peck, Winnipeg, which if followed will insure best prices for skins:—

Ermine, fisher, foxes, lynx, martin, mink, opossum, otter, skunk, must be "cased," that is, not cut open. In skinning, cut at the rump, and turn the skin inside out (like a glove) over the body of the animal, leaving the pelt side out. Then after scraping, cleaning and drying, turn the skin back again while it is soft and easily managed, leaving the fur side out. Then put a thin board inside the skin, cut the natural shape of it; stretching the skin to its fullest extent, but not so much as to make the fur thin. Too much stretching spreads the fur over a large surface, and makes it thin and lacking in richness. A liberal supply of boards should be kept on hand. Never use bent sticks, boxes or anything irregular in shape or that yields. When the above are "opened" they have a southern appearance that lessens their value greatly.

Badger, bear, beaver, cats, raccoons, wolves, wolverine, must be "open" that is, cut open, at the belly from rump to head. After scraping, cleaning and drying, stretch a uniformly oblong shape, to the fullest extent of the skin, but not so much as to make the fur thin. When thoroughly dry, trim off legs, shanks, flippers or any little pieces that spoil appearance of the skin.

Skunk, long stripe, such as come from the Territories and sections of California, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa, cut open and stretch oblong as explained. Skunk with the white stripe (or any portion) shaved out, blackened or tampered with, must be collected at half price. Opossum from Indian Territory, cut open and stretch oblong as explained. Chop off the tails where the fur ends, as they make opossum look poorly and lessen their value. Beaver are sometimes stretched almost round, but appear very much better stretched oblong. Value by the skin, never by the pound. They rapidly lose heavily in weight. They bring most sold by the skin. Muskrats must be "cased," but with fur side in. Chop off the tails as explained. Skin at the nose and make rumps square. Round tails have less value and do not sell well. Muskrats must not be injured by shot or spearing. Trap them.

Skins that have dried without proper care can be treated same as fresh, green skins. Otherwise they have no value. Dissolve a handful of common salt in a pail of fresh water, and apply frequently with brush or rag (to pelt side only as it spoils appearance to wet the fur) until the pelt becomes perfectly soft. Then handle as explained. The same with "open" skins.

Do not cure them with alum or salt. It injures them for dressing and spoils their sale. Do not dry skins at a fire, or in the sun, or in smoke. It often "burns" them; when they then spoil and ruin on being dressed. Dry in the open air where shady. Meaty skins often "burn." The meat and fat on them heats and "burns" them, and they then go to pieces and rot on being dressed. Too much warmth curls and spoils the top fur or hair. Never stuff furs of any kind; dry and stretch as explained. Do not stretch out the nose and make them pointed. It gives a southern appearance and lessens value. Do not cut off heads, ears,

or noses, or mutilate in any way. It lessens value and injures sales. Remove as much bone from tail as possible, otherwise the tail rots.

Fur-bearing animals must not be killed till they have, at least, a fair growth of fur. Stop trapping as soon in early spring as the fur begins to shed or becomes thin, or a little faded. These too early or too late caught furs are a disgrace to fur trappers and collectors, and a wasteful, worthless slaughter.

The Southern Route to the East.

Winter is now upon us in the West, and those of us who may have to make a trip to the east during the season of closed navigation on the lakes, are naturally making calculations upon the most convenient route of going and returning. It is impossible now to take in the lake sail on the way, and if it were possible it would certainly not be advisable at this season of the year, as that is a pleasure only during about three of the summer months.

The all rail route via the north shore of Lake Superior also loses all of its attractions at this time of the year. A ride of a thousand miles through unbroken chaos, with only a village or two for stopping points on the way furnishes rather a dreary prospect for a two and a half or three days' ride, and it is in no way improved by the possibility of being locked up in a snow bank two or three hundred miles from any of the fragments of civilization which dot the dreary route.

It is plain that in the winter our route to the east, if we are seeking pleasure in travel, must be by the old one via St. Paul, Minneapolis and Chicago, and the improvements which have taken place in the manner of travel by the south since the abolition of railway monopoly in Manitoba are such, as to add another very strong argument in favor of this route.

The luxurious train service introduced by the Northern Pacific road between this city and St. Paul and Minneapolis has awakened up the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba management, and an excellent service is now provided on that road also. Thus St. Paul or Minneapolis can be reached with every comfort to be expected in travel, and after a few hours rest a start for Chicago can be made attended with equal comfort. The old routes by the Milwaukee and St. Paul, North Western and Albert Lea furnish every attraction for travellers, and several others are now competing and offering advantages more or less to travellers.

After a few hours of rest, or exercise as the case may be, at the great lakeside metropolis, the traveller without leaving the centre of the city can start from the Chicago and Grand Trunk railway depot, and from there make a choice of routes to Ontario or Atlantic points. He can re-cross into Canada either at Detroit or Port Huron, making connections for Toronto, Hamilton, London or other Ontario towns and cities as the case may be, or he can go on to New York re-crossing into the United States at Niagara. He can go direct on to Montreal or take a day to rest at Toronto by the way, and from Montreal his connections are complete and his route direct to Portland, Maine, Boston and other leading New England points. In short from the Chicago and Grand Trunk depot in the centre of Chicago he can secure direct connections and start for almost any point in New York state, New England, Ontario, Quebec and the Maritime Provinces. There he is at the

pivot from which radiate in every direction routes to the east, and where there is an end to all his trouble and worry of picking his way to an eastern destination.

It requires but a glance at the railway maps of Canada and the north eastern states to prove that for winter travel the route outlined above is the one for real comfort. The traveller passes through large cities of civilization at short distances apart, where intervals of rest and exercise enable him to avoid the great bugbear of travel monotony. Shrewd old travellers, who have to make frequent trips, know this, and take the southern route even in the summer season. To them even scenery grows stale, but they never tire of comfort, and they know as a rule where to find it.

The question of time is one of importance in travelling, and this is saved in a trip to Ontario by the southern route, as connections are now so perfect, that about forty-eight hours covers the trip from Winnipeg to Toronto, London and other cities west of the Ontario metropolis passed by the way, while a ride of almost ten hours more brings the traveller to Montreal. Then the argument of time is not against this route to Atlantic points, and it is decidedly in its favor if the destination is in western or southern Ontario.

Manitoba Coal Fields.

The surveying party which has been at work lately on the Souris branch went east recently. Talking with one of the party we learned that there is no limit to the coal supply in the southwestern district. It extends for miles and is of excellent quality for surface coal. The prospects are that as soon as the mines are opened up and a reasonable depth reached the coal will be as good as could be wished. A tunnel has been made back in the river bank 200 feet where farmers back in their wagons and have them loaded with large blocks from an eight foot seam. They are given all a span of horses can draw and have it loaded on the wagon for them for one dollar per load. Farmers come for 40 miles for this coal and are well satisfied with the quality.—Brandon Times

The nonsensical and exclusive-like system, so common in Canada, of boxing up tellers, accountants, clerks, and others working in banks, much the same as animals in a menagerie, is beginning to loose its hold in this city, and the Merchants' is now not the only bank where every employee is open to the view of the customers. The Union Bank has followed, and now the whole staff there have nothing but a light and artistic wire partition between them and the patrons of the institution when they call in, and the appearance of the whole bank is much improved thereby. Even the manager's room door is so transparent, that a glance tells whether or not he is in or engaged. The arrangement was fitted up by Andrew Schmidt, machinist, of this city, and altogether it is a big improvement on the old menagerie-like system, with its row of small wickets, not unlike apertures left through which youngsters could feed the monkeys with nuts.

LAKE, formerly of the Lake hotel, Moosomin, and recently in the butcher business in Winnipeg, has sold out and will resume the hotel business at Moosomin.