

PIONEERING IN CANADA

Reindeer Industry For Baffin Island

(By C. M. THOMAS.)

A new Canadian industry has been started by the Hudson's Bay Company in the big Arctic island known as Baffin Island, which is north of Hudson Strait, the entrance to Hudson Bay.

Reindeer culture is the industry to which, under the name "The Hudson's Bay Reindeer Company, Limited," the historic trading organization will extend its activities. Vilhjalmur Stefansson, the famous Arctic explorer, is a director of the Reindeer Company, which last year was incorporated under the Dominion of Canada charter as a result of his representations to the Hudson's Bay Company.

The lease of a portion of Baffin Island which the explorer had obtained from the Dominion government was transferred to the new reindeer concern, which purchased in

and helping to make productive some of the vast areas in the Canadian Northland which are at present unproductive, in some cases even of fur.

In order to give the industry a proper start, careful study has been made by the Company, not only of the fund of data gathered by Mr. Stefansson in connection with the Alaska reindeer industry and his Arctic explorations, but also from European sources.

If the industry progresses in Canada the Dominion government will receive a nice sum annually for the areas leased in Baffin Island. Under the terms of this lease the rights of the natives are protected and the government may buy reindeer at reasonable prices for distribution to the Eskimos to form their own herds or for other purposes.



Norway during 1921 a primary herd of selected animals. The initial shipment of reindeer was made in the Autumn of 1921 on the Hudson's Bay Company's well-known steamer the Nascopie after her regular voyage to the fur posts in the Bay had been completed. Five hundred and fifty reindeer were landed at Amadjuak Bay, Baffin Island, and Captain Mikkelsen with Chief Herder Ole Johnson and some families of Laplanders experienced in the herding and care of reindeer, were brought to Baffin Island to take charge.

There has been much speculative discussion concerning the establishment of a reindeer industry in Canada, but aside from this step of the Hudson's Bay Company it is believed that no one has actually had the courage of his convictions to engage actively in the business. The old company is to be congratulated upon taking up this work

Employment for many natives should be provided by the new industry.

The company was fortunate in receiving for its initial work the assistance of Mr. F. H. Wood, of the Royal Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, who some years ago assisted Dr. Wilfred Grenfell in securing and establishing reindeer herds in Labrador.

It was reported that the company would operate also in the northern part of Quebec, to the west of Labrador, but a lease with the Quebec provincial government, who control that great unpopulated area, has not yet been arranged. It is thought that the steps being taken by the company in proceeding with the work in Baffin Island will encourage the Quebec government to arrange for some work of the kind to be undertaken in Quebec as it would undoubtedly be a great credit and benefit to the province.