

handle low-furred, heavy-pelted bears to advantage.

Otter met with exceptionally good sale, and their value advanced to much above what had been realized for them during recent years, owing largely to the high prices paid for seal, of which latter fur otter is much used as an expensive imitation.

The remainder of the collection of this article was well competed for, from the choice dark skins, suitable in the natural state for the finer trade, to the medium grades to be used principally as trimmings after being plucked; and also the lower, commoner kinds found a ready outlet in the coat manufacturing trade.

The present stocks of otter cannot be considered large, and indications are that this fur will meet with favor again this winter, but as the prices ruling during last year were extremely high, owing to severe competition, it is likely that a somewhat lower range of value will prevail.

Beaver, which came once more into fashion two years ago, continued to be well received by the trade during the past decade. It is gratifying that the public has once more taken hold of this handsome fur, and indications are that it will remain in favor for some time to come.

The darker skins were, as usual, taken by the European and Canadian trades, while the medium and paler shades were worked for consumption in this country.

As we say above, beaver is likely to be in demand for some time yet, and as the collection of this article during recent years has been comparatively small, it is reasonable to assume that they will bring good prices again during the coming winter.

Mink was very strong throughout the entire winter, and were much wanted by both our domestic and export trade, even at materially advanced prices. The finer and darker grades from the east and the north found a ready sale at high figures, while skins from all other sections also met with a stronger demand than had been the case for a number of years past.

Owing to this good demand, a keen competition developed for this article, which eventually forced prices too high. This latter fact was painfully apparent at the last London June sales when those exporters who disposed of mink therein were obliged to close out their offerings at a considerable loss. This poor sale in June, coupled with a light demand since, and fairly large stocks both here and abroad, makes the outlook for mink somewhat unfavorable; and we would therefore advise our shippers to handle this article with due caution until the market value of the new collection is firmly established.

Muskrat was one of the very few articles which did not undergo any advance, and through the entire year it has been about the weakest fur on the list. Its poor sale is to be chiefly assigned to the continued popularity of the imported dyed coney as an imitation of the seal, for which purpose a large proportion of the collection of spring muskrat were formerly used. Large quantities of winter and fall skins, as well as spring, were, as usual, shipped to the European markets, where, however, they met with poor success, and consequently good-sized stocks have accumulated over there, besides those still held on this side.

Although, as will be readily seen from the above, muskrat was not at all profitable for the exporter to handle, still this article underwent no noteworthy decline in value, and will probably succeed again in holding its own during the next season. We must admit that this is a somewhat hopeful view of its future, especially when we consider the adverse influence which the present large stocks will have on the value of the fresh collection; but, nevertheless, this is, after all, a staple fur, or fair appearance, and one that can be used in many ways, and we think it fair to assume that it will not undergo any change for the worse.

Skunk again held a prominent place in the fur trade, and might even be described as having been the leading article during the past winter. They were eagerly competed for from the beginning of the season, with the result that prices advanced steadily. A large proportion of the collection found a ready outlet abroad, and being fashionable in our country, the balance met with a steady sale to our home manufacturers. The good demand continued until the late spring, when the article began to show signs of wavering, owing chiefly to the high prices then prevailing. This

weakening tendency was more than fulfilled in the London June sales, when skunk declined sharply from the high prices obtained during the previous sales, netting their owners material losses, since then they have continued inactive, especially the black and short-striped skins, the narrow and broad-striped sorts, on account of their lower value, have met with a proportionately better sale, being adapted for cheaper fur apparel, and for service as trimmings in the cloak trade.

Judging by present conditions, skunk will have to be bought at much lower figures than the high prices of last season. It is, of course, probable that there will be a temporary demand for the early caught skins for immediate consumption, but our shippers must not take this as an indication of a repetition of last year's very active market.

Raccoon were a ready selling article, meeting with a good demand throughout the year, both at home and abroad, and consequently remained firm at good prices. The Northern and Northwestern skins were particularly well sought for, mainly on account of the high value of skunk, of which article heavy-furred dyed coney are a good imitation. The Southwestern and Southern collections were again taken in large quantities by the coat manufacturers, in spite of the many cheaper articles which were introduced as substitutes for coney, and this fact certainly proves that the public fully appreciates a serviceable, durable fur.

The price for coney having ruled quite high last winter, compared with its value during former seasons, and the different manufacturers having apparently all the stock they require for present uses, it is quite likely that there will be a moderate reduction in the quotations for the new collection.

Opossum, which had reached a high level two years ago, scored another heavy advance again this past year. They were eagerly bought from the beginning of the winter, with the result that prices advanced much beyond what they had brought for many years previous.

This article was used chiefly in the dyed state, as an imitation of skunk and stone marten; but its value went so high as to make the imitation too expensive; and for this reason it became quite difficult to sell the made-up article to advantage. This caused a notable shrinkage in its value during the late summer months, and at the present time opossum are meeting with a somewhat indifferent sale even at reduced figures, from which fact our shippers will see that they must prepare for lower prices on this fur.

Red fox were much wanted, both here and in Europe, as, like other furs of the long-haired variety, it was quite fashionable, and was extensively used for dyeing purposes. This demand, however, was in no way proportionate to the great advance which took place in its value, and the abnormal price which was paid for this fur in mid-winter is to be traced only to the foolish and reckless competition between the dealers. This inflation of its value made a precipitate decline a foregone conclusion, and therefore it is no surprise that this article is now bringing about only one-half of its mid-winter price, and even at this reduced figure cannot be readily sold.

Aside from the above, the stocks of this article are also quite heavy, which fact will tend to depress still further the value of the new collection, much lower prices are therefore to be expected.

Gray fox, in sympathy with the advance in other kinds of foxes, showed some animation early in the year, but later it was found that they could not be successfully used as an imitation of silver fox and other furs, for which purpose they had been chiefly wanted, and this led to a sharp decline in their value in each successive London sale.

Judging by present indications, there will be but a moderate demand for gray fox the coming season, and it is therefore probable that they will rule somewhat lower.

Marten continued to sell well, and fully shared in the sharp advance which took place in the value of all the finer furs. The demand for it came chiefly from Europe, although quite a quantity was, of course, consumed in this country. Full-furred dark skins brought exceptionally good prices, while the medium and paler shades did not sell proportionately as well. Marten are now in good style, and as

long as this continues to be the case there will be no noteworthy change in its value; it will probably bring good prices again this winter.

Lynx scored a heavy advance during the winter, particularly in the London January and March sales, at which times they sold for more than double what they had brought in recent years. It was only natural to expect that a material advance would take place in their price, as this article had for a long time been selling at much below its true value, but even the best informed were not prepared for such a sudden strong advance. The cause for its favorable sale must again be sought in the popularity of the long-haired furs, among which lynx is one of the best, both for dyeing purposes and for use in the natural state.

We fear, though, that the active competition of the winter drove the price too high, and a material decline in value has already taken place in this month's London sales. The outlook, therefore, is not at all bright, especially as stocks of lynx are thought to be fairly large, and even with the support of the consuming public a lower range of prices will most probably be established.

Wild cat underwent an improvement largely in consequence of the advance in lynx, of which article long-haired wild cat can be used as a good substitute. The Southern and Southwestern sorts, which are made mostly in robes and coats, did not do relatively as well. The demand for wild cat, as in the case of many of the other furs, has dropped off largely during the summer months and it is unlikely that this article will receive as much attention this season as last.

Wolf, another long-haired fur, were much wanted during the first part of the year, and the strong competition caused the price to advance rapidly. Whereas in former seasons this article had been used chiefly for robe purposes, the high prices prevailing for lynx and red fox induced the manufacturers to attempt to devote the full-furred northern wolf to the same purposes for which the former were intended. In this, however, they were only partially successful, and consequently full-furred skins have been declining steadily during the past five months. In this decline the southern and southwestern collection, which had done well earlier in the year, have also participated, and the very poor showing of wolf in the London sales just ended therefore did not occasion much surprise.

So far as can be judged, liberal stocks of wolf are still held, both here and abroad. This fact, in connection with the present poor demand, makes the outlook discouraging, and it is therefore reasonably certain that during this winter there will be a notable reduction in the value of this fur.

Silver and cross fox, especially the former, continued again their upward flight, selling at even much above the phenomenal prices realized for them last year. The extraordinary figures paid for them was due principally to the Paris Exposition, in which the furs of the entire world were vying with one another to make the finest display of furs, and the keen competition between them for silver fox and the best specimens of cross fox led to the remarkable advance in the value of these two articles. The exposition now being over, and this outlet closed, these two articles will most probably again assume their normal plane of value, and therefore too much care cannot be exercised in the handling of these furs.

White fox and badger have also participated in the general advance, the former being well taken by the fur trade to be dyed as an imitation of the expensive blue seal. Of badger, the heavy well-furred northern skins did best, while the poorer southwestern grades remained relatively neglected.

Sea otter, fisher and wolverine depended, as usual, on the European markets for their sale, as but a small proportion of the collections of these skins are consumed in our own country. They sold readily at good prices, and particularly the first-named article, which, being a fine, rare fur, like the silver fox, was much wanted for the Paris fair.

Kootenay Mines.

St. Paul, Minn., Nov. 23.—P. Stanhope, a mining engineer of Sussex, England, who passed through the Twin Cities yesterday, on his way to his native land, says that the Kootenay country, in British Columbia, will be the Mecca of all American miners before many years have pass-

ed. Mr. Stanhope has spent the past two years in the region about and north of Kootenay lake, and says it is immensely rich in gold, silver and copper, while the railway and transport facilities are such that it pays well to mine a very low grade of ore. Many American capitalists, says Mr. Stanhope, have already realized the mineral wealth of the district, among whom may be mentioned the late Marcus Daly, and now the region is being rapidly developed. In speaking of the country, Mr. Stanhope said:

"I believe that the Kootenay country has an enormous future before it. It contains immense bodies of low grade, free milling gold and silver ore, and, while it has yet scarcely been prospected, it is now paying well. The best paying propositions are averaging about \$5 to the ton, and there are whole mountain sides that can be quarried out with as good returns as that, and, as the ore is free milling, there is a profit of from \$2 to \$3 per ton in \$5 ore. The rush for the Klondike and Nome called many of the miners from the Kootenay district, but now they are, one by one, returning, perfectly satisfied to put in their time working a low grade proposition that is sure, rather than chasing untold wealth that seldom materializes."

"That the railroads believe the country has a future before it is proved by the many spurs the Canadian Pacific is extending into the district. The country is of no value outside its mineral wealth, and a railroad company must of necessity possess faith in a mining district before constructing a line costing \$35,000 per mile into it, which has been the case in several instances in the Kootenay country."

"North of Kootenay lake, in the Similkameen country, large bodies of copper are to be found. This ore is unusually high grade, and pays to mine even now, when there is no railroad into the district. Marcus Daly, several years ago, purchased a large number of claims there, in anticipation of the time when the land would be developed. There is one smelter now at Grand Forks, B. C., and two more are in process of construction in the Kootenay district."

Rossland Mines.

Rossland, B. C., Nov. 26.—The diamond drill, which began work in the White Bear on Thursday last, had bored a distance of 75 feet up to 6 o'clock Saturday afternoon. A seam of ore one and a half feet in width was passed through. It was a pyrothite and the characteristic ore of the camp, and it is thought to be a stringer from the main vein.

The output for the week is up to the average, but does not greatly exceed. The Centre Star is shipping a little more than usual, but on the other hand the Le Roi is shipping a little less. The record for the camp for last year has already been beaten by 12,000 tons and the end of the past year will place the total output beyond the 200,000 ton mark. Appended is a list of the shipments of the past week and the year to date:

Le Roi for the week 3,950, for the year 146,975. Centre Star for the week 2,242, for the year 11,773. War Eagle, for the year 10,663. Le Roi No. 2 for the year 2,267. Iron Mask, for the week 120, for the year 2,243. I X L for the year 530. Giant, for the week 60, for the year 474. Evening Star for the year 351. Monte Christo for the year 273. Iron Colt for the year 80. Spitzee for the year 67. Total for the week 6,102, for the year 193,716.

Grand Forks, B. C., Nov. 26.—James Breen, formerly connected with the Northport smelter, has acquired the controlling interest in the Brooklyn and Stewind properties at Phoenix. The news was confirmed by Mr. J. E. Boss, who reached here Saturday. Development work on an extensive scale will be resumed in January. It is the ultimate intention of Mr. Breen to erect a smelter on the North Fork of Kootenay River, near Grand Forks. Messrs. Mann & MacKenzie, of Toronto, who formerly held the controlling interest in the group, still retain an interest.

The Family Herald and Weekly Star is offering two beautiful pictures as premiums with that journal, to subscribers for 1901. The one is the famous Hoffman's, "Christ in the Temple," and the second entitled, "Home from the War," a pleasing incident of the late South African campaign. These pictures are really works of art, and well worth framing. Many less valuable prints may be seen in almost any home.