

ada more especially. Take as an illustration the men's fur coat trade. In this country a brisk demand has always been felt for good pelts. Comparatively speaking, however, the prices which were in the past asked and given for these pelts were low, in the opinion of many people well qualified to speak, too low. The cause of this, however, was simply that these furs, such skins as raccoon, wombat, etc., for example—excellent material for their purpose—were neglected by other countries, and, with the sparse population of this one, were in greater supply than actual need called for. Hence a comparatively low valuation of them, which went on until say fifteen years ago.

Then a demand for these articles of clothing grew up in the Northern and Northwestern United States, while meantime the Canadian North-West continued to grow. Still the supply was ample. Next came the unprecedented business prosperity in Canada and the United States and the exceptionally heavy demand which it brought for all classes of furs, good, medium and cheap, which practically cleaned up all surplus stocks. Finally there was the experience of last winter, when it is no exaggeration to say that, owing to the growth of the automobile habit, something like 30,000 additional fur coats were called for in the European trade. The result of this demand, coming on a market already fairly bare, may be conceived. Dealers find themselves met by the necessity of presenting prices to the consumer of from 10 to 30 per cent. higher than those prevailing a year ago. The trouble is that even at those figures, there is no profit for themselves, and yet, if they were to charge more, the trade would drag. The public is not always reasonable.

Besides the considerations above mentioned, there is the fact that in spite of the commercial depression in Germany, owing to last winter commencing early there and being a cold one, everything in the fur line was disposed of early in the day and without difficulty. The Russian trade also, as well as that in other European countries, was good, while in the United States the plethora of money had the natural result. A consideration of these factors brings us up to the London fur sales of last March, when the quantities offered were by no means excessive, and indeed, generally speaking, were somewhat less than usual. Buyers came from all parts of the world, fresh from triumphs in their home markets. People from the United States were in special evidence, as also were their frequently erratic methods of trading. Some of their purchase prices indeed have still to prove themselves warranted. Arrayed amongst all these considerations, the Canadian market cuts but a small figure, though this fact is often but little realized on this side.

Let us now come to individual examples of the prices realized at the March sales. Mink found itself up in value equal to that of what are called the good old days of thirty years ago. But one thing should never be lost sight of in admitting this. Only mink of the highest value is referred to. The high prices realized for mink skins of the highest grades have resulted from its extensive use as trimming for ladies' coats. Red and white foxes all brought higher figures because of the increased manipulation of this skin in

blending shades, brought about by recently perfected chemical processes. Bear skins, too, were very high, perhaps unwarrantably so, unless some new development in the situation should lead us to revise our opinion. Otter ruled very high, but this is a fur which perhaps has never been valued sufficiently high in this country. Wolf brought almost unheard-of prices, due to the keen demand for tails, the dressy effectiveness of which is being more and more realized. Skins of this animal, which usually sell for \$1.50, fetched last March \$4 and \$5. Muskrats sold better than had been expected. The offerings were large, but an increased demand for this skin for lining fur coats maintained prices firmly. Lynx realized prices positively startling, but this is another skin which has always been lower in price than it ought. As high as 57s. was given for skins for dyeing purposes. All classes of furs suitable for linings advanced in price. Russian sables, owing to an attempted cornering of the market by Russian dealers, did not meet with favor, and it was largely brought in by holders, as it could not realize the prices looked for. Sales of Persian lamb were very large, and the market is now practically clear of it. The coming crop is said to be a good one, about equal in quality and quantity to that of last year, though sizes of skins are said to be smaller; prices, however, should certainly show an advance of 20 to 30 per cent. compared with last year, as people of all countries are using them extensively.

SPRING HINTS.

In April and early May is the time of year when high winds make themselves felt and blow the dust in clouds from street and roadway. The dust penetrates houses and offices and makes the storekeeper's life a burden trying to keep it from injuring his merchandise. It gets into one's clothes, and what is worse, into one's hair and throat and nostrils. Spring dust, in towns and cities especially, is very hard on the young, on the old, on the delicate, and not because of discomfort merely, for it is dangerous to the health of any one. Decaying vegetable matter, the droppings of horses and dogs, the spittings of men and women who may have tuberculous disease, dirt of all kinds, get ground into dust on the road or street and may be blown into the human system to work all the harm it can. Here is a reason for sweeping the streets, so that this precious dust may not menace the passer-by. And a reason, too, for the regular use of the water-carts, so that dust may be kept from rising and blowing into houses.

The doctors tell us that this early and chilly season of the year is the worst for children and old people and sufferers by all pulmonary troubles. But it is not the inclemency of the weather alone that makes such people ill: the dirty and dangerous spring dust of the street with all its poisonous ingredients gets into their mouths and throats, their nostrils and ears, and the bacilli of various diseases thus find lodgment in the system. If we would lessen disease let us make some attempt to clean our streets and lanes and keep down this spring dust.

Housewives show an example at this time of year that is worth following in the municipal sphere. Carpets are taken up and shaken, the floors scrubbed, the windows cleaned, the walls whitewashed or papered, every nook and cranny swept, washed, aired, perhaps painted. And a delightful sense of freshness throughout the house results. These proceedings are nearly universal, *inside of*