

## Is Guild Idea in Research Feasible?

Interesting Discussion of Advantages and Disadvantages by Technical Journal

The Canadian Chemical Journal, in a recent issue, publishes a thoughtful and illuminating editorial on the proposal that has been made to group Canadian industries together for the purpose of pursuing research work of common interest to the firms composing the industry. It says in part:

"It is proposed that firms in various industries be grouped, and trade guilds established for more active co-operation along research lines. It is proposed that these guilds enter into partnership with the Government on the community research principle. A battalion of difficulties and problems in the smooth working out of any such scheme present themselves. And yet again this seems a logical treatment of the situation from the standpoint of the Government. Most of these guilds would be expected to support their own research laboratories without much continued Government assistance. Weaker and younger industries would receive more substantial Government support. It is supposed that work undertaken would bear a general relation to the industry, and would be of general value when brought to a conclusion. As a key-note to this outlined plan a Central Research Institute is conceived, incorporating within itself a Bureau of Standards, the services of which would be free to all industries."

Referring to the differences between the Mellon Institute at Pittsburgh, where investigations are financed by the individual firms, and the scheme proposed, the editorial goes on to say:

"There are certain fundamental differences, however, between any existing industrial research institution, and the plans at present under consideration by the Advisory Research Council. These laboratories, from the viewpoint of the industries or firms they serve, are in no sense charitable institutions. Their first care is to think in concrete terms for one particular firm connected with a certain industry. No doubt some of the problems worked out in such places make exceptions to this rule, but the rule holds. In the agreement between the firm and the industrial laboratory, special care is taken that the results of work accomplished shall not be of any value to other competitors in the same business. This is the aim at least, and if general results of value are obtained, they are not given out until such time as the firm establishing the research is well on its way towards its patent rights. As pointed out, some companies are large enough to be entirely self containing. They are already beyond the point where ordinary government co-operation would be of much value or desirable."

"General assistance producing general results, supposed to be of equal value to everyone, does not seem to be just what keen industrial executives have striven for in the past. If the government proposes to lead a guild in special research, it must lead so well

that no firm will meet an undue measure of success by handling its problems through a private institute of research. It is conceivable that occasions may arise where a firm desires to exploit its own idea under cover and win or lose alone. In such cases, the Mellon Institute, or institutes of similar nature, will always possess appealing advantages. It would be well for the government, right at the start, to so modify its machinery that it might possess some of these advantages. Government effort along these lines will be hampered by: lack of flexibility in action; the impossibility of overcoming seniority; ever present Civil Service examinations; non-technical superior heads; probable lack of funds and miserable salaries; no bonus system for success, and no dismissal for failure. These may seem trivial things when considering such a broad general programme, but they are very essential details if the time is at hand when the Government sees fit to attempt to father the industrial research of Canada beyond the well trodden lines now established.

"While the whole scheme of guilds for research is as yet only a possible proposal, there are many points that give it a strong appeal. Our industries are not yet so varied or complex but that they might be moulded into such a scheme. A definite opportunity would be created for those men whom it is proposed to train under assisted fellowships and scholarships. The competition in trade after the war will force weaker industries and firms to tune up their methods of working. The fundamentally unsound habit of hoarding antiquated trade secrets and rule of thumb methods would tend to be abolished, and a broader conception should develop among the men employed in any particular industry, which should assist in expanding trade."

### War Linen Industry

(Continued from page 37)

15,925 acres. The war is responsible. Not only did it seriously affect the European production, but it created a tremendous demand for linen, both for airplane wings and other purposes.

Heretofore, our small linen manufacturing industry depended for its raw material almost entirely on foreign yarns. As the war went on, supplies of these began to dwindle, culminating early this year in Great Britain, the main source of supply, prohibiting the export of all linen yarns. Our linen mills had either to close down or go

into some other line of manufacturing. Some went temporarily into cotton spinning, and a campaign was at once begun for stimulating the flax fibre industry in this country. As a result, production of flax fibre has been tremendously increased, mills are being equipped with linen thread-making machinery, and, very soon, Canada will supply her own linen requirements, send a great deal overseas for war purposes, and ship considerable to the United States and Australia, who are anxious to take any surplus.

Will European competition drive the industry out of business as before? Hardly. The manufacturers have seen to that. Representations were made to the Dominion Government, as a result of which an Order in Council was passed last month granting a bounty on linen yarns made in Canada. Then, too, the manufacturer's old friend, the protective tariff, comes to their aid. Duties of from 20 to 35 per cent on the finished product are imposed, besides a war impost of 7½ per cent; whilst raw material is admitted free of duty. With such encouragement, it will not be the Government's fault if we do not have a prosperous linen industry after the war.—M. J. P.

### FIRE PREVENTION WEEK BEGINS OCTOBER 9TH

In view of the fact that Canada's fire loss amounts to almost \$30,000,000 per annum or \$3.75 per capita of the entire population, the Dominion Association of Fire Chiefs in its recent convention at Toronto, inaugurated a bureau to aid in the prevention of fires throughout Canada. This bureau is seeking to obtain the active co-operation of every fire chief in a Dominion-wide fire prevention campaign commencing October 9th, and asks for the hearty support of the people in its attempt to reduce the inexcusable fire waste from which Canada suffers. The Commission of Conservation heartily supports the movement and trusts that the Fire Chiefs' Association will receive the co-operation of every good citizen throughout the Dominion. As the Commission has repeatedly pointed out, fire waste affects the economic well-being of every individual, impoverishes the country as a whole, and tremendously handicaps our effective participation in the present struggle for world liberty. From the individual, civic, and national points of view, it is the burden duty of every Canadian to assist in the suppression of preventable fires.

### THE FUEL CONTROLLER'S MESSAGE

IN view of the extraordinary demands on the part of the United States due to its war efforts, all must be prepared to conserve coal. At the present time, it is evident that the users of hard coal must supplement this supply by a certain quantity of soft coal and wood. While this war is on we must be prepared to adjust ourselves to conditions that may affect our comfort, especially if it means greater war effort.—Mr. C. A. Magrath, Fuel Controller for Canada.

## Game Sanctuary for Northwestern Canada

Would Protect Mountain Sheep, Caribou and Moose

The Advisory Board on Wildlife Protection has been drawing attention to the need for protecting important game resources of Northwest Canada, and is now looking into need for a game sanctuary in Yukon territory to save from destruction mountain sheep, caribou, moose and other large game that are found in considerable numbers in that region.

"From information obtained by prospectors, hunters, trappers and Indians it is estimated that there are probably between 4,000 and 5,000 mountain sheep in the district located by the White, Donjek and Nihi rivers," says Mr. A. L. Bell, of R.N.W.M.P., Whitehorse sub-district in reporting on the advisability of establishing such a sanctuary. "The animals have undoubtedly been driven to that district from the more accessible areas on account of persistent hunting on the part of both white men and Indians. Unfortunately the Yukon game ordinance does not sufficiently cover the preservation of mountain sheep, as under Sub-section 9 of Sec. 9 explorers, surveyors, prospectors, miners or travellers who are engaged in any exploration, surveying, mining operations, or other examination of the territory, and are in need of the beasts, birds or eggs of food, may lawfully hunt, take or kill the beasts or birds, and eggs of birds or other wild fowl so mentioned in this ordinance. Section 23 of the ordinance states, 'with the exception of Section 3 hereof, this ordinance shall not apply to Indians who are inhabitants of the Yukon Territory' (Section 3 applies to buffalo and bison.)"

"I have no doubt that mountain sheep, as well as moose, caribou, and other large game, have been wantonly slaughtered by Indians—and by white men as well—not only for food, but also for feed. The Indians accuse the white men of this, and, on the other hand, the white men accuse the Indians of the same. Unfortunately, the Indians are aware that, under the ordinance they may kill practically as many game as they wish, for food or otherwise.

"I consider the suggestion of creating this area into a sanctuary exceedingly good one, and, if it is carried out, a detachment of one or two men could be established, or a competent game warden employed, with dogs or pack-horse, could patrol the district at regular intervals and keep in close touch with both Indian and white men. This is, in my opinion, the only method by which the game can be preserved."

Press reports say that the salmon run in the rivers of northern British Columbia is especially heavy this year. Fishermen have been making fabulous wages.

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