

## Cheap Power for Alberta is Urged

Associated Boards of Trade Take Action to Promote Power Development

Public opinion in Alberta appreciates the fact that the production and distribution of cheap electrical energy is of cardinal importance to the general progress and prosperity of the province. At a recent meeting of the Alberta Associated Boards of Trade the following resolution was passed:—

"That in view of the beneficial results in other provinces, we urge on the Provincial Government the extreme importance of the development of cheap power in Alberta, whether from water-power, coal, natural gas or other source, at the earliest practicable moment."

The urgent necessity of providing for a comprehensive system and policy of power production and distribution in the Prairie Provinces has on a number of occasions been pointed out by the Commission of Conservation. Mr. James White, Deputy Head of the Commission, in a paper read at the Calgary Industrial Congress last year, indicated that the proper future solution of Alberta power problems lies in electric generation from coal in comparatively large super-power central stations properly located both with regard to coal mines and power distribution centres and using small coal that would otherwise be wasted. The paper reviews the various other possible sources as follows:—

"Owing to its unique characteristics, its special adaptability for various purposes, and the possibility of its rapid exhaustion, natural gas should be zealously conserved for use in its sphere of greatest efficiency. In my judgment, this sphere is not the development of power on a wholesale scale."

"The water-powers of Alberta, valuable though they be, are, nevertheless, limited both with respect to magnitude and situation. Owing to low-water conditions, water-power must be augmented by power from other sources."

"Now, the great source to which Alberta must look for power is her coal. During recent years, the great advance made in the art of the production of steam-power is phenomenal. This advancement has given coal, as a prime agency for power development in competition with other prime agencies, almost a premier position. Those interested in the furnishing of power on a wholesale scale in Alberta must make their research into, and selection from, the achievements made in recent years in the field of power produced from coal."

In connection with this move for public or co-operative efforts towards well organized power production and distribution, it is of interest to note a recent statement

by Mr. H. G. Acres of the Ontario Hydro-Electric Power Commission:—

"Under co-operative municipal ownership, a block of power delivered to the outgoing lines at Niagara is not valued by what it can profitably be sold for, at so many dollars per horsepower per annum, but by what it means to the individual citizen as an agency for increasing his comforts, conveniences and general standard of living, and for facilitating increased commodity production. Such conditions tend toward the building up of the greatest asset any country can possess, an increasingly prosperous and contented population."

## Protection of the Farming Machinery

Closer Scrutiny of Costs of Production Necessary under Lower Price Conditions

One of the factors entering into the cost of farm production is the outlay for machinery. The present high prices of equipment are a serious cause of complaint from the farming interests, and yet many farmers are content to leave their machinery and implements exposed to the weather, often in the field where last used.

In a manufacturing plant, where all machines are under cover and well taken care of, 10 per cent depreciation is written off annually. What, then, must unprotected machinery suffer?

High prices for farm produce have been to a certain extent conducive to carelessness in the costs of farming. The lowering of prices will compel a closer scrutiny of farm expenses, and one of the important items will be cost of machinery and repairs.

Protection of the equipment from weather will largely reduce repair bills. At the end of the season, all wearing parts of the machines should be well greased, accumulations of dust removed, and they should be placed under cover. An implement shed will quickly pay for itself in saving in outlay for repairs, apart from the fact that it facilitates cleaning, repainting or repairing machinery during spare time.

Seasons and weather will not wait for farm machinery that is unready, and a heavy loss may often be the result. To the increasing number of farmers who are keeping accounts of their farming operations, this item of upkeep of plant will appear as an outstanding and largely avoidable expense, and the more general keeping of farm accounts may directly effect the reduction of the present waste.

Reports from the Arctic slope as to the quantities of fish available in those waters have been so encouraging that the Mackenzie Basin Fisheries Co. is installing a \$700,000 cannery plant at Black Bay lake, Athabaska.

## Many Sockeye Reach The Spawning Beds

Although an Off-year the Spawning Beds on Fraser River are Well Seeded

More sockeye salmon passed through Helgate, in the Fraser River cañon above Yale, this year, and reached the spawning beds of the upper lake section of the Fraser basin than in any other season during the last five "lean" years, according to John P. Babcock, Deputy Commissioner of Fisheries for British Columbia and a member of the Commission of Conservation.

Helgate on the Fraser was the scene of the great rock slide of 1913 which occurred during railway construction on the banks of the Fraser river and prevented the salmon from reaching the spawning grounds. Unfortunately, 1913 was one of the "big" years, and this resulted in a much reduced migration to the spawning grounds in 1917, the next big year. Mr. Babcock quotes Fishery Overseer Scott, who has been observing conditions in the Fraser River cañon during the season, as reporting that the number of sockeye that passed through Helgate this year was as great as in 1917.

This heavy run of sockeye to the spawning beds augurs well for a successful fishing season in 1924, at the conclusion of the four-year cycle. As Mr. Babcock has said, speaking before the Commission of Conservation in 1918, "If the spawning beds are well seeded, you can confidently expect a run four years hence. It does not necessarily follow that you will, because for three years, when the fish are out in the ocean you do not know what happens to them. You can seed the beds well and have a failure, but if you do not seed the beds you cannot have a run. The fish cannot possible be hatched in salt water, therefore, the spawning beds must be protected, and sufficient fish allowed to reach them, if we expect a continuation of the sockeye run."

It must not, however, be inferred that the runs of the "big" years have recovered from the enormous injury done to them by the rock slide in 1913. The catch in 1921 may be so reduced that it will not be greater than one of the so-called "lean" years.

## Hydro-Electric and Man Power Compared

Higher Wages Demand Greater Use of Mechanical Power in Production

The direct relation of the intensive use of electrical energy to national prosperity is often much underestimated. The importance of electricity, and particularly of hydro-electric power, has been increasing at a very rapid rate. It is certain that in the near future, it will prove to be an even greater productive factor and it is, therefore, essential that we should jealously safeguard its primary

source, our water-powers, by guiding them into proper channels of development and utilization.

Recent opinions expressed in Great Britain confirm this view. The *Times Engineering Supplement*, referring to conditions in England, states that, "it would be of national value if all classes of the community could be brought to understand what enormous productive power is implied in the universal employment of electricity. It is surprising how much more momentum is gained for fallacies than for truths in economic propaganda. The greater productive power per head in America is still industriously used as a proof that the workmen of the United States are more energetic." The fact is simply that the American worker has commonly two or three times as much horsepower to assist him. It is not his bodily energy but his electrical energy that produces these results. Formerly, when wages were low it seemed to pay the British manufacturer better to put his men to work in the purchase of mechanical power than to incur capital expenditure in the installation of higher mechanical power equipment; but in the present circumstances conditions are obviously changed. There is profit in horsepower, as compared with anxiety and probable bankruptcy in lavish employment of man power."—*L. G. Deane*.

## Utilization of Moleskins

Where moles are plentiful, it frequently becomes necessary to trap them to reduce their numbers. When this is done, the skins are well worth saving, as they are not troublesome to prepare and good skins bring 50 cents each or more. The largest and finest moleskins are obtained on the Pacific coast.

Specially designed traps are employed for catching moles. These are set in the underground runways and in such a manner that, when the animal follows its natural instinct to repair the runway or to heave up fallen earth, the trap is sprung. One type has scissor-like jaws which straddle the passage; another has choker loops which are set so as to encircle it. The soil must be loosened so that the trap may close through it. To place the trap in the runway itself is futile, as the animal will then make its way either under or around it.

With care, a mole can be skinned with a pair of strong scissors or a pocket knife. The skin should then be tacked on to a board, fur side inward, and stretched as much as possible. It can then be dried, but not in the sunshine. After drying, skins may be stored indefinitely if kept free from mice and insects.

Moleskins are used to make neck-pieces and muffs for ladies' wear and sometimes for coats. The fur is soft, close and velvety and generally uniform in colour. A process of home-tanning moleskins is described in Farmer's Bulletin 832 of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, which also gives illustrations of the various traps, etc.