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OYSTER INDUSTRY.

Canadian Beds Are Being Revived on Eastern Coast.

vigorous effort is being made to revive the Canadian oyster industry in the Maritime Provinces. An agreement has been reached between the Dominion Government and the Maritime Provinces regarding the title to shore fisheries in the latter. Mr. Frost says, and already the most famous and most productive areas, those of Prince Edward Island, have been surveyed and are now being leased for private oyster culture. Sites for these oyster beds are open to foreign as well as Canadian oyster companies, and Government instruction and assistance will be given to those who undertake to build up leased oyster beds.

The species of oyster found in eastern Canada is the same as that of the entire Atlantic coast of North America. The Canadian beds are confined almost wholly to the extreme southern shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The Maritime oyster matures somewhat more slowly than that of the southern regions, requiring four to five years before being of marketable size, while the southerly oysters require but three to four years. Its shell is comparatively heavy and rough, moreover, and with irregular laminations, which make it difficult to open. It is said to stand shipment and storage better than the more southern oyster.

The adverse conditions which have brought the oyster beds of these provinces to their present condition have been numerous.

The most influential factor in the destruction of the Maritime oyster beds, is authoritatively stated to have been the practice by farmers of dredging for so-called mussel mud, in reality oyster mud, for fertilizer. This material consists of a deposit of disintegrated mussel, clam and oyster shell, and contains many of the shells themselves, and even live crustaceans. Under the belief that the shells constitute its most valuable portion the diggers have sought to operate where the shells were most numerous, often upon the very oyster beds themselves. The value of mussel mud as a fertilizer is problematical, since if used without copious animal or other matter it is inimical to the growth of plants from the land disastrously. It is unquestionably a soil stimulant, however, and for many years the farmers disputed with the fishermen on the contention that the oyster industry was less important than the mud digging. In 1877 Governmental experts recommended that no mud be dredged within 60 yards of a living oyster bed, and in 1892 a regulation was put in force prohibiting digging within 200 yards of oyster beds. This restriction has now shown itself beneficial to the industry.

A good measure of success for Canadian oyster culture is foreshadowed not only by the experience of oyster farmers in the United States, France, England and Japan, but also by the experiments conducted here by the Dominion Government and by private enterprise. Capt. Ernest Kemp, the oyster expert of the Canadian Government, has built two large artificial oyster beds which, although dating but from the summers of 1910 and 1911, give every promise of being highly successful and productive. In 1910 an area of four acres in the outer portion of Richmond Bay was planted with 365 barrels of small oysters obtained from the bars off Ram and Curtain Islands in the same bay. This bed is at present in excellent condition. In 1911 another four-acre tract was prepared near Caribou Island, off Pictou County, in the Straits of Northumberland, and was planted with about twenty-five barrels of Richmond Bay oysters.

From the quantities of oysters formerly produced in island waters, however, it is evident that there must be sufficient food matter present there to support from six to eight times as large a yield as the current one, if the proper sites are chosen.

Houses Built Without Nails.
 In Alberta there is a village of houses which have been constructed without nails. As a matter of fact, little or no hardware of any character has entered into their construction. These houses have been built by Ruthenian immigrants and their architecture is quite novel. Their first attempt at house-building are usually of the kind they had been accustomed to over in Europe, and their buildings are of the typical Ruthenian style—log, pitch-roofed, thatched and wide in the eaves. In many cases these buildings are put up without a dollar's worth of hardware. Even the door, an affair of slender twigs woven and laced together, swings on home-made hinges and is latched with a wooden hasp. The floors are of heven logs, unnailed. The roof, as the favorite Russian roof always is, is a wonderful fabric of poles and crosswoven wheat straw, 10 inches thick packed tight and laid with such care that it will shed the weather for twenty years.

James Murray, Oceanographer.
 James Murray, an oceanographer of Glasgow, who has been selected by Vilhjalmur Stefansson to join the staff of his Canadian Arctic expedition, was an important member of Sir Ernest Shackleton's Antarctic expedition, and in his mind the importance of scientific comparison between the north and south polar regions. His program of work on the Canadian expedition will include biology, microscopic investigation and oceanography, the latter including soundings, observations of tides and currents, and the study of the chemistry and temperature of the sea water. He is also taking colors and drawing materials for use in case opportunity should arise for the exercise of his artistic gifts.

To Study Ice.
 The Government marine survey is sending a party to James Bay to make a study of the ice movement in connection with the establishment of a port for the new Hudson Bay Railway.

1,200 MILES FOR MATCHES.

Explorer Stefansson's Story of Awkward Mishap in the Arctic.

With a rifle and a sufficient supply of ammunition, said Mr. Vilhjalmur Stefansson, the Canadian explorer, lecturing before the Royal Geographical Society in London, it is possible to go over the discovered lands of the Arctic. In the course of an interesting lecture Mr. Stefansson told a remarkable story of a five years' sojourn in Arctic regions in search of a race of Eskimos who had never before been seen by a white man. They left New York in April of 1908, and the small item that may upset the best-laid plans was illustrated by the fact that they were relying upon a supply of matches at Herschel Island on the north Alaskan coast, and as these were not forthcoming Dr. Anderson had to retrace his steps a distance of 1,200 miles to Barren Point for them. "The whole expedition cost only \$10,000," said Mr. Stefansson, and quite half that sum was spent in securing matches. From Herschel Island the party pushed steadily eastward and reached Cape Parry in the winter, and here they found a whale, which eked out their provisions fortuitously. "That whale," recalled the explorer with a dry smile, "had been dead four years." The Eskimos said so. It had frozen in the winter, and had thawed in the summer. It was after he had been two years in the Arctic that Stefansson set out upon his specific quest for the Eskimos who, to use his own words, "had not been contaminated by missionaries or traders—the scientific point of view." After a long pursuit Stefansson, standing on a hut, saw the party he was searching for seal hunting about seven miles away, and went after them. The Eskimos thought they were spirits, and prepared to defend themselves, but his (Stefansson's) Eskimos discovered that they spoke a similar dialect, and peace was secured and introductions to all the tribe—men, women and children—ensued. Intellectually these Eskimos were on a level with the inhabitants of Great Britain 10,000 years ago. It was on Victoria Island that he came across the blonde Eskimos, whom he preferred to call bronze or copper. Their eyes were blue, their eyebrows and whiskers fair, and the formation of the head and face akin to Europeans. Sir John Franklin had recorded that he saw one such Eskimo in 1824 in the Coppermine district, and Stefansson said he had come to the conclusion that they were descendants of an ancient race of settlers who, originating in Scandinavia, had traveled to Mackenzie by way of Iceland.

Gave Wolsley Raspberries.

Now that the British nation is lamenting the loss of one of her greatest warriors of modern times, it is interesting to meet with people who accompanied Lord Wolsley on the Red River expedition, which made his name a never-to-be-forgotten one to the Canadian people.

Such an one is Alexander Ritchie, of North Toronto. Mr. Ritchie, moreover, as far as he is aware, enjoyed the unique distinction of being the youngest member of the volunteers who took part in repelling the Fenian Raid in 1866.

Mr. Ritchie was born at Kingston in 1850, and at the age of 14 he joined the volunteers. When the Fenian Raid took place in 1866, Mr. Ritchie, then only 16 years old, was sent with his regiment to Cornwall, where it was stationed till the trouble blew over.

In 1870 the Louis Riel rebellion, which led to the Red River expedition, broke out, and Private Ritchie was one of the members of the expedition. Mr. Ritchie recalls how one day, at a wild spot away beyond Lake Superior, he and some of his companions-in-arms were picking raspberries when Col. Wolsley rode up on horseback. Mr. Ritchie, who had his linen hat cover full of the berries, offered them to his commander, and the colonel helped himself.

Asked about the expedition, Mr. Ritchie described how they went by boat to Prince Arthur's Landing, now Port Arthur, but at that time an unsettled wilderness, and of the arduous journey from there to Fort Garry. Specially prepared boats, manning six oars and about 30 feet long, were used for transporting the men and supplies up the Red River. The first boat set off on the 4th of July and it was the 27th of August before the last boat reached Fort Garry.

Hair Turned Grey.

Two-thirds of the survivors of the Antarctic Polar Expedition, which was headed by the late Capt. Scott, have either their hair turned gray or become bald as a result of the hardships endured on the trip. In a letter just received by his father from C. S. Wright, the Toronto physicist, who was a member of the party, this tale is told: "Came through the expedition unscratched, except for a few gray hairs. (Two-thirds of the expedition have turned gray or bald.)"

Though the letter does not state the reason for the men's hair turning gray or falling out, hair specialists in Toronto think it to have been caused by the excessive cold weather and not from the hardships suffered by the party. Intense cold often causes catarrh in the hair, which has the effect of turning it gray, or of loosening it at the roots, so that it falls out.

Antediluvian Monsters.

The Government explorers, who spent last summer in the Canadian west, looking for fossils, returned with "tons" of specimens.

Two monstrous skeletons of the dinosaurs, one 32 feet long and the other 40 feet long, were discovered in the bone beds of the Red Deer river, Alberta.

The remains of a horned plant-eating dinosaur and of the flesh-eating dinosaur were found.

These interesting specimens will be mounted and placed on exhibition at the museum in Ottawa.

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