

Overcrowding Land is not Profitable

By Intelligent Planning, Larger Lots
can be Sold for Less Price

Assuming that a real estate agent had ten acres of land to divide into city lots, would he be able to sell his lots at a cheaper rate by developing his tract so as to make (1) 88 plots of 374 square yards each, or (2) 68 plots of 600 square yards each?

This is not meant for a conundrum, but the answer is not quite so obvious as it looks. Raymond Unwin, designer of the Hampstead Garden suburb, and one of the greatest living authorities on city planning, taking an actual instance from a Canadian city, shows that as a matter of fact some unfortunate persons were actually paying \$60 per lot for the privilege of having the lot reduced by 226 square yards.

The explanation of this seeming anomaly is found in the difference in the cost of road construction. In each case the cost of the land was \$15,000; but, whereas, in the first case, the cost of the 2,520 feet of roads amounted to \$30,240, making the total cost of land and roads \$45,240; in the second case only 1,320 feet of roads were needed, which could be constructed for \$15,840, making the total cost of land and roads only \$30,840. Hence, in the first instance, the 88 lots of 374 square yards each cost \$514 per lot; while, in the second, the 68 lots of 600 square yards each cost only \$454 per lot. A sublime instance of the folly of leaving the subdividing of real estate in the hands of individual owners, without supervision by some central authority!

Some explanation of the landlord's part in this seemingly incredible folly may be found in the fact that the municipality bore about three-quarters of the cost of the roads and, consequently, the owner ignored this cost, though, of course, it fell upon the public and wasted both land and road-making operations to the extent indicated in the above figures.

The above, of course, is an extreme instance, but it is valuable as illustrating, in an exceptionally striking way, the economic unsoundness of over-crowding. In another very moderate example, taken from an English city, Mr. Unwin shows that plots of 2613 square yards, subdivided in accordance with correct principles of town planning, could be rented for 113d. per week, while plots of only 834 square yards, not so subdivided, could not be rented for less than 8d. per week. To this example he subjoins the trenchant comment: "I am quite sure that it would be very difficult for any of us to persuade a child of seven to give 8d. at one shop for 83 marbles, if he could buy 261 for 113d."

Shoals of Herring Wasted in B.C.

Neglected Opportunities in Pacific
Coast Fisheries—Openings in
Canning Industry

Notwithstanding the fact that the fisheries business has made rapid progress in British Columbia in recent years, and now constitutes one of the most important branches of industry in the province, there are still excellent opportunities for building up a profitable trade in canning certain kinds of fish. It is the opinion of those who are familiar with conditions that scarcely a beginning has been made in commercially exploiting the many varieties of fish which abound in these waters. Vast shoals of herring run for months every year in the hundreds of bays and inlets along the thousand miles of British Columbia's sheltered sea coast. They teem in shoals in Nanaimo, Pender and Prince Rupert harbours, Quatsino sound, and many other harbours and bays, from the Fraser river to the Alaskan boundary. Every year thousands of tons of herring are swept in by the tides to be left stranded and dying on the shores of a hundred bays. This is a great waste of material and opportunity which does not seem to have been taken into account by those who are interested in the fisheries industry.

Interest Centres in Salmon Fishing. The interest in the British Columbia fishing industry has so far been centered almost entirely in salmon packing, and there is no lack of capital and enterprise in that particular branch, which has been exploited to the neglect of other important features of the business. The season of the salmon run is short, and the canneries are closed down during most of the year, while herring can be taken all the year round along the entire coast, although the heavy run is during the winter months. This would enable the factories to continue operations throughout the year and would obviate, to a large extent, the difficulty of securing a sufficient number of hands to handle the business during the high season in the salmon-canning industry.

Herring and Halibut It is only in recent years that halibut have been taken in commercial quantities on the British Columbia coast, and, so far, the packing of sardines is practically an untried enterprise. The herring, which are caught in large quantities, are now mainly used as bait in the halibut fisheries, and for that purpose only the larger fish are kept. Nothing is done with the smaller ones, which could be packed for sardines. There are, along the provincial coast, scores of fine sites for sardine factories, where the fish could be caught in adjacent waters in unlimited quantities and at small expense.—U. S. Consular and Trade Reports.

Kamloops, B.C., Opens Public Market

The city of Kamloops, B.C., has opened a public market. On the opening day a goodly crowd of citizens were present early in the morning, ready to receive the vendors. But the farmers showed less earnestness than the citizens: the earliest vehicle was half an hour late, and only 6 more appeared in the course of the day. The market conditions were such that the demand largely exceeded the supply and the small amount of produce offered was readily disposed of. This success should encourage more of the surrounding farmers to take advantage of the market. White farmers will not compete with the Chinese in peddling their produce from door to door, but might reasonably be expected to meet their customers at a central market. Kamloops is to be congratulated on its efforts to bring consumers and producers into direct contact with one another, and this praiseworthy effort should meet with the success it deserves.

Playing in Streets is Dangerous

But Children Must Play Some-
where—Urgent Need of Safe
Playgrounds

In connection with the "safety first" campaign, much is being said just now as to the danger of children playing in the streets. Films are being shown in the moving-picture theatres, presenting dangers from motor-cars and other vehicles vividly before the eyes of the children themselves. No doubt this is a good work for the conservation of human life, but it is a sad state of affairs that the children have no bet or place than the streets in which to play. Very often the man with the automobile is only using the streets as a playground—there are as many autos bound on pleasure as on business—and if we give the man in the motor the right-of-way over the child on roller skates, it is incumbent upon us to find the latter some place in which to amuse himself, free from danger. If new sub-divisions were laid out on garden city lines, there would be a space in the centre of every block where small children could play near home, and open spaces would be reserved here and there for larger children and adults. Much must be done, however, to remedy existing conditions, as well as to plan for adequate recreation facilities in future. A much greater use could be made of school playgrounds after hours than is now the case, and in many cities, where sufficient playing fields do not exist, a very considerable expense is justified in providing such. A city is a place in which not merely to work, but to live completely, and complete living includes wholesome bodily exercise for every citizen.

Proposed Engineering Authority

Government should Exercise, same
Supervision over Coal-Mining
as over Water-Power
Development

In Western Canada there are usually a number of coal seams quite close together, and, should the lower seams be the more desirable with regard to quality and ease of working, there is nothing to prevent the operator from mining them first. In fact, this practice is now being followed in a number of cases in the west. As a result, caving of the measures will render it difficult, and, in many cases, impossible, to recover the coal from the upper seams. Owing to the wide distribution of coal, and the granting of leases to any one desiring to mine it, the operator who looks to the future and mines the coal in a systematic manner, at an additional cost to himself, has to compete with the operator who takes the easiest available coal. There is, therefore, little encouragement to use other than wasteful methods. A case came under notice where, owing to a great demand for coal, the directors instructed a mine-manager to produce an output greater than the development work justified. The mine-manager was forced, against his better judgment, to obtain the coal wherever he could. Some pillars were extracted and others were reduced to such dimensions that they were not able to bear the weight of the superincumbent strata. As a consequence, there was a squeeze, and to-day the mine is badly wrecked and much coal has been lost. In this case, the opinion of an engineering authority would have stood between the mine-manager and the directors of the company.

It is suggested that an engineering authority be appointed by the Dominion Government to approve of the methods to be employed at all mines operated under a Dominion Government lease, and that the chief inspector of mines of each province be associated with the engineering authority in so far as matters relating to the operation of mines in that province are concerned. It would also be the duty of such authority to investigate all applications for leasing of coal lands and to determine the conditions under which such leases should be granted.

It is of interest to note, in this connection, that the Dominion Government exercises a stricter supervision over the leasing of water-powers than that suggested with regard to coal; yet coal is just as important as water-power, and, unlike it, can be exhausted.—From "Conservation of Coal in Canada," by W. J. Dick.