

Commission of Conservation CANADA

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CONSERVATION is published the first of each month. Its object is the dissemination of information relative to the natural resources of Canada, their development and the proper conservation of the same, together with timely articles covering town-planning and public health.

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NATIONAL CONTROL OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The experience of the Great War teaches us its clearest lesson that national efficiency in peace, no less than in war, depends directly on the wise common control of the natural resources, which are the basis upon which all human welfare necessarily rests. The nations of Europe are turning with one consent to the control of their supplies of coal, iron, copper, timber, oil, and water-power by all the people through their government for the common defense and for the common good. . . . Our natural resources must be retained in national control. We see now, more clearly than ever, that natural resources are the foundations of national efficiency and defense. The Great War has proved definitely that coal, oil, timber, and other resources are as important in modern warfare as men and arms. Water power in particular ought to be kept in the public hands, because it is a vital necessity in the production of nitrates and without nitrates high explosives cannot be made.

In addition, we know that if there is "an economic war after the war", the national control of natural resources will be a fundamental essential to this nation. Government control of the natural resources of wealth is necessary if our nation is to be industrially efficient, if it is to be prepared either for war or for peace. There is a widespread patriotic trust just ahead of us.—Gifford Pinchot, President of National Conservation Association, United States.

Barn Fires

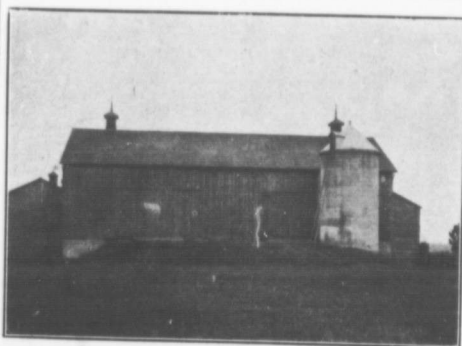
Lack of Windows an Incentive to Dangerous Practices

In any statement of buildings destroyed by fire, barns and stables occupy a prominent place. One of the chief reasons for this is the necessary use of lanterns and other lights. In many barns artificial light must be used at almost all hours, with the resultant element of danger.

The illustration herewith shows a splendid farm building, well built and kept in good condition, with the surroundings neat and tidy. It is, however, lacking in one

of Halifax, demonstrates that mink can be successfully bred in captivity.

"In the spring of 1914, I decided to try if some success could not be attained with this highly nervous and delicate animal, and bought two pairs from a rancher. As one of these had been injured when caught it died shortly afterwards, but after some difficulty I was able to purchase another female. In the spring of 1915, I had fourteen live minks, but unfortunately on account of not separating the young of one of the families from the mother soon enough, I lost the mother. In the spring of 1916 I



Cut No. 155

Daylight has been shut out of this barn, making it necessary to use artificial light, which is often supplied through the dangerous practice of lighting matches.

essential—sufficient windows to provide light for the interior. With closed doors this barn would be almost completely dark, and hence the incentive to light a match. There is nothing more dangerous than a lighted match in a barn, with, probably, loose straw or hay on the floor, and everything as dry as tinder.

Daylight is one of the cheapest of our natural resources, and it is easily transmitted. While making use of daylight, farmers will at the same time remove a very serious element of fire danger—a cause of fires in barns and stables which can only be charged to pure carelessness.

Mink Farming

These Valuable Fur-bearers Can be Successfully Bred

While fox ranching is the most important and best known branch of domestic fur production, the rearing of various other valuable fur bearers will probably occupy a prominent place in future fur-farming development. The experience of Mr. E. L. Macdonald,

had forty-six to take care of, and, profiting by my experience of the year before, was able to save all of them and this year, with no bad luck, I will probably have one hundred animals.

"If their surroundings are at all natural, with the proper care in feeding and a little judgment in the mating season, I can see no reason why anyone so inclined, cannot raise mink both profitably and as a pastime.

"I find the ranch-bred mink are more contented and much larger than the wild ones, and believe the regular feeding is conducive to better fur; being larger, of course, the animal is more valuable from every standpoint.

"The dens should be large enough for them to play in, and as natural as is possible, although they are animals that do not require any luxuries if their house is dry and clean."

It is estimated that the consumption of lumber for the making of phonograph and other talking machine cabinets in 1916 was 75,600,000 square feet of manufactured hardwood lumber and 50,000,000 square feet of veneer.

The High Cost of Delivery

The result of a preliminary survey by the United States Census Bureau has shown that "For four important classes of commodities—coal and wood, milk, ice and department-store merchandise—which together represent a very considerable proportion of the cost of living, the expense of delivery or cartage one way constitutes, on the average, more than 8 per cent of the total cost to the consumer. The percentages for the individual commodities, however, vary greatly from this average. For department-store merchandise, the delivery expense, as indicated by the data so far obtained, represents less than 2 per cent of the selling price; for milk and dairy products the corresponding proportion is 12 per cent; for coal and wood, 19 per cent, and for ice, 45 per cent."

So costly has become the item of cartage and delivery that "in the case of many articles of food, the amount received by the producer is only one-half or one-quarter, or less, of the price paid by the consumer, and it was the belief, borne out by the result of the preliminary enquiry, that the item of city cartage alone would be great enough to justify calling attention to the very large sums that the community is called upon to pay in maintaining the wasteful and highly complex systems of individual delivery which characterize retail distribution at this time."

INDUSTRIAL TRAINING

Every year, more than 2,000,000 children and youths are recruited in the United States and Canada to industrial and commercial enterprises. School statistics show that 75 per cent of the children who enter school leave between 14 and 16 years of age to work in mills, factories and stores.

The percentage going to work at this age with definite training is negligible. These young recruits to industry are employed in highly specialized tasks. Drifting from job to job, in later years, many settle down to become handy men and unskilled labourers. Hardly one in a hundred ever obtains a chance to become a skilled worker or master of a trade. What wonder that employers bewail the shortage of skilled workers and that the labour market is overstocked with thousands of unskilled workers.

To meet this situation Canada must provide some form of technical training whereby all who enter agricultural or industrial occupations shall be provided with at least the preliminary elements of vocational training.