

given to farmers to fight the grasshoppers and assuring him that the commercial community would endorse the expenditure of any sum necessary for this purpose.

Mr. Beicher, manager of Gault Bros. wholesale dry goods, was elected a member of the board.

The World's Fur Sale.

The first London fur sale took place at Garraway's Coffee House just two hundred and thirty years ago. From that moment until the present London has maintained her position as the great fur mart for the world, and the great annual fur sale, or rather series of fur sales, which have just been taking place at the College Hill Mart, serve to remind us anew of her pre-eminence. Beaver may give way to otter, and ermine yield to the superior claims of silver fox, but the fur-bearing animals of the earth, almost without exception, no matter how remote the region of their birth may be, may expire in the assurance that their pelts will reach the capital of the British empire.

It is not at first easy to understand why London should thus be the fur emporium of the world. We are not a specially cold country, and we certainly wear fewer furs than almost any other people, but it is doubtless connected with the capital's pre-eminence as a commercial centre, and the nation's rank as shipper-in-chief to the universe. Whether or not London can always hope to retain its hold upon the fur trade we will not venture to predict.

About the middle of March the fur dealers begin to arrive from every corner of Europe. Paris, St. Petersburg, Moscow, Lelpsic, Frankfort, Buda-Pesth, firms had despatched their expert buyers, as did the United States and Canada, to the London fur mart. At the Hudson's Bay Company's warehouse in Lime street and at Lampson's were hung up or pigeon-holed for the inspection of these buyers hundreds of thousands of the undressed skins of bears, foxes, seals, otters, sables, marten, mink, skunk, and musquashes. Here, too, were the hides of lions, leopards, gigantic polar bears, and large numbers of musk-ox from the shore of the Arctic sea ready to be sold to the highest bidder.

It was our privilege to make a tour through the Hudson's Bay warehouse with an expert furrier—a Russian, who has been all his life in the trade. Before him his father was in the employ of the Menikoffs, and he himself has been a clerk in the great Russian fur company, that corporation which sought to rival the English merchant-adventurers, and which once owned Alaska.

On a row, depending from nails, the visitor sees the most precious treasures of the Hudson's Bay Company's collection. What diamonds are to the Jeweller, these skins are to the fur trade. So rare are the furs of the silver fox this year that only 555 have been garnered by the white and Indian trappers of the company. The silver fox may not be the most beautiful of furs (personally our guide prefers the sable, the marten, and the kitt fox), but last year the price, which had been yearly rising, reached the figure, at the March sales, of £570. It is marvellous the insight the expert possesses. He is able by merely handling this or that fur to tell the country and even the exact district of its origin. Sometimes he is obliged to have recourse to the sense of smell in order to pronounce an opinion; but he is rarely deceived. Scores of buyers are roaming the

mammoth warehouse, each attired in the long white wrapper prescribed by immemorial custom, and each carrying a bulky catalogue in his hand, in whose pages he inscribes the necessary particulars concerning each skin, or bundle of skins, whose acquisition seems to him desirable. Nimble attendants bring him the pelts, placing them on one of the many long tables for examination. It is extremely diverting to the visitor to observe the pride with which certain of the furs are brought forth by the attendants; and it becomes clear that the warehouse employees are experts and connoisseurs, too, and that they are equally alive to the beauties of a good fur as any furrier or Parisian coquette. You hear one man remark:

"Gle me a good soft marten and I wouldn't swap it for any other pelt going, in the mere matter of beauty. There's a little chap yonder that ought to be on the shoulders of a duchess. And yet I suppose he'll go for a couple of pounds. If he'd come from Siberia instead of Canada he'd be worth more; and even now I'd like to bet he'll finally besold as sable."

But, in the midst of the furriers from St. Petersburg, Sofia, Stockholm, Antwerp, Paris, Berlin, Lyons, and Dresden, your eye's retina, will ever be conscious that, mingling with all, is the omnipresent, eternal Jew. You will, here at this great fur sale, behold yellow Tartar faces and pale-haired Scandinavians, and swarthy Roumanians, but it is the Hebrew type which, after you have forgotten individual lineaments, you will carry away with you. And when you have seen this and noted it you will perhaps have convinced yourself of one indubitable fact; that there is money in the fur trade.

This year's fur sale commenced with other skins, for which there was more spirited bidding than last year, and prices ran 20 per cent higher. Here is the company's list of furs for the current year: On Monday, March 19.—9,539 skins, otter; 6 skins, sea otter; 4,151 skins, fisher; 535 skins, fox, silver; 3,476 skins, fox, cross; 18 skins, fox, blue. On Tuesday, March 20.—57,905 skins, marten; 11,329 skins, fox, red; 3,591 skins, fox, white; 25 skins, fox, kitt. On Wednesday, March 21.—39,607 skins, mink; 13,924 skins, lynx; 3,051 skins, wolf; 923 skins, wolverine; 10,857 skins, skunk; 13,476 skins, raccoon; 2,430 skins, beaver; 10,831 skins, musquash. On Thursday, March 22.—9,008 skins, bear, black; 897 skins, bear, brown; 239 skins, bear, grey; 118 skins, bear, white; 588 skins, musk ox; 4,158 skins, hair seal; 1,262 skins, badger; 14,075 skins, ermine; and sundry skins and furs.

But these are by no means all the furs sold at the world's fur emporium during the past week. After the company's sales came that of the free traders known as the Lampson sales, which realize annually about a million pounds sterling. Anticipation in both cases was realized when the furs of the precious silver fox came under the hammer. The bidding ran high, and yet higher, until the unprecedented sum of £400 was paid by a Russian buyer for a single fur, beating last year's price by £30. Indeed, with the exception, perhaps, of such furs as fisher and blue fox, most of the furs advanced in price this year, especially all varieties of foxes.

But the lion skins—are there no more bogus sportsmen, they who used to figure in our novels and stage farces—they who paid extravagant sums for imposing trophies of sport? Because here at the fur sale at College Hill numbers of magnificent hides from the king of beasts went for

a mere song—a few paltry pounds. Twenty lion skins for the price of a single silver fox! It seems incredible.

At the great Lampson sale a most interesting spectacle consisted of a long row of furs—silk lined mandarin robes sent to London from China to be sold. They were sumptuous garments, but they were disposed of for prices almost within the reach of a bank clerk at a moderate salary. One wondered how it was they came to be sold, and a little Jew trader from San Francisco told you:

"They were intended as a present from the city of Pekin to several northern mandarins. The mandarins died. That is all."

And with the sale of the mandarins robes the last London fur sale—that for 1900—is over.—Mr. Beckles Willson in London Leader.

Railway and Traffic Notes.

The Northern Pacific Railway Company have a gang of men at work extending their line to Lake Manitoba. It is expected that the road will be completed by the end of next week.

The Dominion minister of railways gave notice in the house on Wednesday of the following subsidies to railways in the west. To the Canadian Northern Railway Company in further extension of their railway north of Swan river towards Prince Albert, Northwest Territories, in addition to previous grant further mileage not exceeding 100 miles, \$320,000; for a railway from the westerly end of the Waskada branch of the C. P. R., Manitoba, further westward, not exceeding 20 miles, \$64,000; for a railway from a point on the Alberta Railway and Coal Co.'s railway towards Cardston, Alberta, N. W. T., for 30 miles of railway at \$2,500 per mile, \$75,000; to the Kaslo and Lardo Duncan Company for a railway from Duncan lake towards Lardo or Arrow lake, B. C., or from Lardo to Arrow lake, not exceeding 30 miles, \$96,000. The conditions on which railway subsidies are granted are the same as last year, namely: \$3,200 per mile when the cost of construction is below \$15,000, and when over that cost the government pay half the cost of construction but not to exceed \$6,400 per mile.



SEALED TENDERS, addressed to the undersigned and endorsed "Tender for Supplying Coal for the Dominion Buildings," will be received at this office until Tuesday, 24th July, 1900, inclusive, for the supply of coal for the Public Buildings throughout the Dominion.

Combined specification and form of tender can be obtained at this office, where all necessary information can be had on application.

Persons tendering are notified that tenders will not be considered unless made on the printed forms supplied, and signed with their actual signatures.

Each tender must be accompanied by an accepted bank cheque made payable to the order of the Honorable the Minister of Public Works, equal to ten per cent. of amount of the tender, which will be forfeited if the party decline to enter into a contract when called upon to do so, or if he fail to complete the work contracted for. If the tender be not accepted the cheque will be returned.

The Department does not bind itself to accept the lowest of any tender.

By order,

JOS. R. ROY,

Acting Secretary.

Department of Public Works,

Ottawa, June 28th, 1900.

Newspapers inserting this advertisement without authority from the Department will not be paid for it.