

## Commission of Conservation CANADA

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CONSERVATION is published monthly. Its object is the dissemination of information relative to the natural resources of Canada, their development and proper conservation, and the publication of timely articles on housing and townplanning.

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## Make Life on the Farm Appealing

Since the war a problem which has been worrying agriculturalists all over the country is that of keeping the boy and the girl on the farm. All the literature that I have seen on the subject shows quite plainly that no panacea has been discovered to meet the difficulty in connection with the exodus of the boys and girls from the farms. I think that hon. gentlemen will all agree that we can at least go a long way towards solving the problem by adopting better farm methods; by making the home more attractive; by keeping better livestock; by making more profit on the farm, which will make possible more comfortable conditions such as will be conducive to happiness and contentment; by making conditions tolerable for the farmer's wife; and generally by doing everything we can to make life on the farm appealing. In addition to this, I think that good roads and cheap automobiles should play a very great part in helping to keep the young people on the farms by rendering very valuable assistance to the farmer in different ways in connection with his work and by enabling him and his family to move around and mix with the neighbours, thus obtaining some social pleasure out of life.—Hon. S. F. Talmie, in House of Commons, May 14, 1920.

## Moving Houses to Improvements

Calgary has a new plan of assessment, under which much of the surrounding land heretofore lying sterile, owing to its subdivision into building lots far in advance of requirements, will be constituted an agricultural belt, and will be assessed as such. While this assessment basis is operative no local improvements will be instituted. Consequently, many houses built on outlying lots can have no hope of securing municipal conveniences for years. This condition is creating a house-moving boom. The Calgary Herald estimates that upwards of 200 houses will be moved into the improvement area within the present season.

Many municipalities are struggling under indebtedness incurred for the purpose of providing roadways, sewers, sidewalks, water, lighting, etc., to widely-separated homes. By controlling and consolidating building areas much of this excessive extension of services would be avoided. The moving of buildings to the area where conveniences are available has much to commend it: it obviates expenditures to install services, and thus reduces the tax rate; it prevents the dissatisfaction of residents in outlying areas who are deprived of conveniences, and it permits of the return of the land to general agriculture or to use as market gardens.

Municipalities in which boom periods have left homes in the outlying areas without municipal improvements should give this matter serious consideration.

## Information on our Forest Resources

**Inventories of our Forest Wealth  
Discounting Extravagant State-  
ments**

The absence of reliable information in the past has given rise to ludicrously inaccurate and extravagant estimates of our forest resources. For years it was the regular pastime of a certain class of orators to dwell on the boundless resources of Canada in forest wealth. We have had a long, uphill fight to combat the evil effects of such misleading statements and, in some quarters, it has been a decidedly unpopular fight. We are still far from possessing anything like satisfactory knowledge of our timber supplies but we have made or are making steady progress.

The Conservation Commission has completed and published the results of its studies of British Columbia forest resources. We know, beyond any doubt, that the Pacific province has tremendous resources of timber and that exploitation can be vastly increased without any fear of encroaching upon capital stock, provided that loss from fire and other destructive agencies can be checked. The Commission have made similar studies in Saskatchewan and the Dominion Forestry Branch is in a position to estimate conditions in the Prairie Provinces as a whole.

Within a few years we should have a working knowledge, sufficient for all practical purposes, of the forest resources of the entire Dominion. Until that stage is reached, the work of national stock-taking will continue to be a first claim upon those who are engaged in the promotion of forest conservation, and particularly upon the Commission of Conservation, by whom it was inaugurated. We have no reason to feel particularly proud of our progress in this connection but we have shown the way in this matter to the United States, where they have only recently realized the necessity for a nation-wide survey of their timber possessions.

## Fur Farming

**Raising Rabbits for Profit**

On this continent, the rearing of rabbits is mostly in the hands of fanciers and people who keep them merely as pets. In Europe, however, rabbits form an important item of the food supply. In North America, owing to prejudice, dressed rabbit only brings about half the price of chicken.

Rabbit fur is also low in price. Although certain breeds of rabbits, e.g., the so-called Siberian hare, produce a fur which is quite handsome, only very low prices are obtainable as compared with the price paid for the fur of the muskrat, etc.

In New Zealand and Australia, wild rabbits, which were formerly a pest, are now a source of profit. At present prices, a hunter and trapper, with a good dog, can make from \$20 to \$40 a day. In 1919, New Zealand alone exported 14,153,982 rabbit skins, valued at \$3,734,280, as compared with 7,854,152 skins, valued at \$1,458,806, in 1918. Most of the skins were shipped to the United States. In addition, 1,372,860 frozen rabbits were exported to European countries for food, valued at \$235,270. Some landowners find that rabbits are more profitable than sheep. Winter skins have sold as high as \$2.15 a pound. Canadians who raise rabbits in captivity thus have to face competition from Australia and New Zealand.

Rabbit-rearing in this country may develop: (1) By supplying choice fresh meat and skins of extra fine quality; (2) by merely raising enough for domestic use and disposing of the skins for what they will bring. They can be raised in the backyards with less trouble and expense than are required by chickens.

Rabbits must have only clean food. They thrive best on clover, alfalfa, dandelion, oat and wheat straw, carrots and hay. They may also be given such weeds as coltsfoot, couch grass, shepherd's purse, vetches and plantain. Fresh water should be available at all times. In winter they may be given mashes of oatmeal, barley meal, etc., with milk, fed warm, and potato peelings, boiled soft. Young rabbits, under two weeks old, should be kept from green food, grain or roots.

Hutches are simply well-fitting boxes, closed top and bottom, both ends and back, and having two doors in front. One of these will be a wire-covered door, the other of wood, the latter opening into the sleeping chamber, which should be partitioned off from the other portion. A smooth round hole in the partition will allow the rabbits ingress and egress. The dimensions of the hutch will vary with the size and number of rabbits but should have not less than 12 square feet of floor space and a height of 2 feet.

## City Shade Trees Need Protection

**Conditions in one City an Index of  
Almost General Disregard of  
Municipal Trees**

As an illustration of the lack of care and appreciation of shade trees in some cities, a statement by Ald. Rubenstein, of the Administration Commission of Montreal, is enlightening. He says: "Vandalism on all sides is rampant; no care whatever is being taken of the trees already existing; they are being ruthlessly dealt with by all persons, even by the public utility companies, and nothing is done by the authorities to look after them or to replace those that have been cut down or have died through ill-treatment or otherwise." He also requests the said Commission "to state what instructions have been given in this connection, how much has been included in the budget for this purpose, and whether they propose to give their attention to this important matter."

It is this question were asked of many municipalities, the answers would show the almost utter disregard of one of the greatest blessings of the pedestrian during the sultry period and one of the most important amenities of urban populations.

## Metering City Water

In 1908, 49 per cent of the services in the city of Omaha were metered. In 1919, 91 per cent were metered and, if the city services and unused services are deducted, 98 per cent were metered.

In the year 1908, the city pumped 6,144 million gallons of water. In 1919, although the population had increased to about 199,000, as compared with 145,000 in 1908, the consumption had only increased to 7,616 million gallons. Had the consumption not been fully metered, it would probably have been at least 10,000 million gallons, or 30 per cent greater than it actually was. This increased consumption would have necessitated additional pumps, new and larger mains, greater expenditure for upkeep and maintenance, and larger sewers to carry off the extra water.

The Omaha consumption is unusually high for a metered service, but this is due to the large use of water by the stock yards and packing houses which accounts for 36 gallons per head of population of the total consumption of 107 gallons.

The Omaha consumption of 107 gallons per head per day may be compared with the consumption in Ottawa of 175 gallons per head.

A pulp and paper company will construct dams and erect mills at Tobique Narrows, N.B. The company has purchased 1,700,000 acres of timber lands from the New Brunswick Railway Co.