Conservation

A monthly bulletin published by the Commission of Conservation, Ottawa, Canada.

VOL. VII MAY, 1918 No. 5

Has Splendid Fire Prevention Record

Massey-Harris Company Has Loss of Under $500 in 30 Years. Sprinklers Largely Responsible

"A sprinkler system working under proper conditions is, without doubt, the best automatic fire protection there is," writes Mr. James Corbett, who for 29 years has been chief of the private fire protection system of the Massey-Harris Company at Toronto. "The allowance on premiums by the insurance companies soon pays for the installation and the owner has a protective device he can rely on, providing it is kept in proper condition, *i.e.*, free from frost, with goods piled a proper distance away from the sprinkler heads and feed valves easily accessible, kept wide open and sealed, if possible."

Mr. Corbett approves of the suggestion in CONSERVATION for March that basements be provided with dry sprinkler systems, with outside connections to which the fire brigade may attach its hose, but suggests, in addition, that the water should be admitted to the system by an automatic trip valve operated by the fusing of a link, several of which in the basement could be connected with the valve. "The great advantage in this," he states, "is the instantaneous operation of the sprinkler heads, which means much in minimizing the loss. A delay of three minutes, as little as could be reasonably expected for a fire department to make hose connections and turn on the water, might mean the destruction of thousands of dollars worth of property."

"Those who have had experience with sprinklers," Mr. Corbett continues, "will agree that all basements of stores and factories should be equipped with them. In all the Massey-Harris factories, two in Brantford, one in Woodstock and the large Toronto plant, the combined loss in thirty years has been less than $500. All these plants are 100 per cent sprinklered. Many fires have broken out during the period and, while all were not controlled by sprinklers, we have yet to find where the sprinkler system has failed.

"A basement fire occurred a few months ago in Toronto in which a loss of $25,000 was incurred. If $500 had been spent in equipping this basement with a sprinkler system, the loss would have been very small. Basement fires are the worst that firemen have to contend with; for much smoke is generated, which has no chance to get away. Often a hose stream, turned into a basement window, does more damage than the fire itself."

Private Aid Given in Pulpwood Studies

Private Firms Recognize Importance of Regenerating Cut-over Lands

During the coming season, the Commission of Conservation will continue, under the supervision of Dr. C. D. Howe, of the Faculty of Forestry of Toronto University, the study begun last year, of the conditions on cut-over pulpwood lands in Eastern Canada. Arrangements for co-operation and collaboration have been made with the provincial governments of Quebec and New Brunswick, and it is anticipated that similar arrangements will later on be made as to Ontario. The co-operation of the Laurentide Co. and of the Riordon Pulp and Paper Co. has been secured, under which small parties will be established on the limits of these companies, to make detailed studies of the conditions on representative areas, the companies sharing in the cost. The financial assistance given the Commission by these companies is a unique experience in government scientific work and testifies to the value of the investigation.

It is proposed to establish a limited number of sample plots, for the more intensive study, throughout a period of years, of the life history of the forest, with a view to determining the specific causes of the changes which take place in its composition, thus gradually establishing an adequate scientific basis for technical forest management.

In view of the extreme importance of the forest resources of Canada in the economic life of the country, for both war and peace, studies of this character are regarded as being equally as important as many other lines of scientific research looking toward the development and re-construction of our economic life after the war.—*C.L.*

Floods caused a property loss in Pittsburgh of 17 million dollars in the 20 years preceding 1916.

Army Hospitals Show How to Save Fats

Salonika Hospital Recovers Fifty Tons Monthly from Waste

At the extensive base hospitals near Salonika, approximately 100,000 pounds of fats are recovered each month from dishwater and table scraps. This quantity has been easily obtained without depriving the men of their 'dripping' and suet, and is sufficient to produce about 80,000 pounds of hard soap, 20,000 pounds of soft soap, as well as considerable quantities of dubbing and glycerine for the manufacture of ammunition.

This fat is obtained from the following sources:

(1) All the bits of bacon rind and other fats that are left at table. (2) The skimmings from stew. (3) Grease from boiled bacon or ham and fat from pans in which onions, tomatoes, or eggs have been fried. (4) Bully beef tins. (5) Bones, especially marrow bones. (6) Grease from dishwater.

The grease from the dishwater is recovered by means of a simply constructed box trap placed near the wash sinks. All animal fats are carefully rendered in large caldrons to prepare them for the uses to which they are to be put.

Such materials should be conserved in Canada. They are of great importance and the waste in large hotels and restaurants is very considerable.

CANADA SHOULD CAN HER OWN SARDINES

Canada imports annually, canned sardines valued at over $100,000. The major portion of these imports are from the United States, Norway, the United Kingdom and Portugal, in the order named. Oddly enough, only 20 per cent of the New Brunswick catch is canned in this country. The remaining 80 per cent is shipped to Maine to be canned by American canners. The Canada Food Board is at present taking active steps to have these fish canned in Canada. If this is done it will be, obviously, a distinct advantage to Canadian consumers.

Good Food Fishes Are Being Wasted

Are Thrown Overboard Because Public Does Not Know Their Good Qualities—Publicity Needed

The soil-miner of the prairies, who persists in growing nothing but wheat, has his counterpart in the deep-sea fisherman who throws overboard many varieties of fish, retaining only those which can be easily marketed. Both are wasters and both are destroying a heritage that should be passed on to many succeeding generations unimpaired. In the case of the fish, however, the demands of the market are the deciding factor. Consequently, it is essential that persistent efforts should be made to popularize species of fish which are now little used, but which are excellent food.

One of these, is the Canadian plaice. This fish has a very limited sale in Canada, in spite of its valuable food properties and although this species is in demand in other countries. Mr. A. G. Huntsman, in his booklet on "The Canadian Plaice," states that "one is certainly conservative in stating that several million pounds are lost annually, while a much larger quantity could doubtless be obtained if those spots were fished where the plaice is most abundant." Again, "if the plaice (at present thrown overboard) were marketed at current rates for the fresh fish, it would mean for the fishermen an additional revenue of about $300,000 and the retail value would be from $500,000 to $1,000,000 yearly."

He also states that "the plaice is sweet and of fine flavour, is not oily, but rather similar to the flounder or sole, though having a distinctive texture and flavour . . . It is suitable for use throughout the year, seeing that it lives in such cold water, but it is in better condition in the autumn and winter after the season's growth and before the spring spawning condition is reached. Also, from the standpoint of shipping conditions the cold part of the year is preferable, but from December to April 1st, it will not be possible to obtain it in the gulf of St. Lawrence because of the ice, although to the south, it will usually be possible to get it at any time of the year."

(Concluded on page 18)