

The Ever Prosperous Island

J. E. B. McCready, Publicity Agent for Prince Edward Island, Briefly Reviews Conditions in That Smallest Province — Agriculture At Its Best — The Fox Industry Coming Into Its Own — Other Activities Which Maintain Prosperity.

Why are times good in Prince Edward Island? Chiefly because our staple products of the farm and the fisheries have for years past commanded higher prices than ever before.

Incidentally because our soil is naturally fertile and very easily tilled, our farms well equipped with good live stock, farm machinery and implements, while climatic conditions are such that we have an assured proportion of rainfall and sunshine during the growing season.

As shown by the Census of 1911, Prince Edward Island produced of wheat, oats, potatoes and roots 14,632,244 bushels, as against 21,907,936 bushels of the like crops produced by New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, whose combined area is 24 times as great—2,184 square miles against 49,413 square miles.

As shown by the same Census, the value of field crops, animals and their products and fruits per farm was, for the year, in Prince Edward Island, \$885, in New Brunswick \$584 and in Nova Scotia \$460.

The Census of 1911 also showed the value of farm implements and machinery, per farm, to be, in Prince Edward Island, \$246; in New Brunswick, \$157, and in Nova Scotia, \$87.

Comparing the Canadian provinces, the Food Board finds that only one, Prince Edward Island, seriously devotes itself to farming. Following is a table showing the number of cattle, sheep, hogs and poultry per square mile in the three eastern provinces:

Province	Cattle	Sheep	Hogs	Poultry
P. E. Island	52	41	28	348
Nova Scotia	13	10	3	44
New Brunswick	8	5	3	25

It is to be borne in mind that in ordinary live stock per square mile the Maritime Provinces lead all others, with Nova Scotia in second place, New Brunswick third, Ontario fourth, Quebec fifth and so on down. Prince Edward Island is far in the lead, with a proportion of over four to one as compared with Nova Scotia.

And yet this is but half the story of the Island's pre-eminence in live stock. The above table takes no account of our silver foxes, the most valuable of all farm animals, one silver fox being worth three horses, or five cows, or, say sixteen hogs or sheep. In silver foxes we have far more than all the rest of the world combined. Our last year's production of fox pelts, sold in New York, St. Louis and London, and of breeding foxes, sold in a score of provinces,

states and foreign countries, including Norway and Japan, brought to the Island not less than a million dollars.

Contributory causes of our present admitted prosperity have been the car ferry to the mainland, the mussel mud industry, and the system of co-operative industry adopted in our farming operations.

Taking these in the order named, the car ferry broke the shackles of our winter isolation in the winter of 1911-12, giving us since that date continuous communication throughout the year with the outside world. The great gain has been that we can now ship our produce to outside markets any day and every day of the year. Before we had the car ferry all our products shipped outwards and all merchandise coming inwards had to be twice transhipped from cars to steamer and from steamer to cars on both sides of the strait. Now there is only one transshipment. With the broadening of the gauge of the Island Railway, promised during the coming summer, all transshipment will be obviated and our products will be loaded on broad-gauge cars at the point of production and will go through to destination without change. Again, before the car ferry was in operation we had not the privilege of heated cars in winter and of refrigerator cars in summer in which to ship our perishable products. These are now available at Borden, and will soon be available wherever required, and will prove to be of immense benefit. As it is even, now, our farmers and producers get much more nearly the mainland prices for their products than ever before. And that is no inconsiderable gain.

Our mussel mud industry is unique. Mussel mud, made up of the shells and decayed bodies of shellfish, is a very valuable fertilizer, of which there are vast deposits in the bay and estuaries about our coasts. Some three years ago the Provincial Government too thought to make this potential wealth available for the farmers and established at Midgeal, on St. Peter's Bay, a dredging plant, equipped with steam dredge, wharf and railway sidings. This is owned and operated by the Government which delivers the mud on the cars at cost to all applicants. It is thus distributed to many different railway points covering two-thirds of the area of the Island, besides a considerable distribution by scows and water carriage to nearer places. From the beginning the demand has far exceeded the supply, although nearly four thousand

cars have been shipped since the operation was begun. So successful has this Government enterprise proved to be and so much appreciated by the farmers that it is contemplated to establish a second mud dredging and shipping plant in the western part of the Island.

Co-operative dairying, introduced years ago under the guidance of Dr. Robertson, speedily obtained wide extension. Poultry and egg production has been greatly and profitably stimulated by the operation of egg circles, which have been multiplied, and have standardized our egg products, so that Island eggs now command top prices. Many of our farmers now turn out \$500 worth of eggs and poultry yearly where, before the annual value produced in these lines was negligible. Nearly \$250,000 worth of eggs alone were co-operatively disposed of last year in the province. Co-operation is being extended in various lines of marketing, buying and selling, that I need not enumerate. Perhaps enough has been said to establish the truth of the Food Board's statement that the Island Province has devoted itself somewhat seriously to the business of farming and has attained a position of precedence among the eastern provinces of the Dominion in that regard.

Our farmers make up nearly 80 per cent. of our people and they are enjoying prosperity, which along with their numbers makes for general good times. They also enjoy the benefit of the lowest taxation known in Canada, or in North America. Our merchants profit by serving a community so compact and of such large purchasing power. The ordinary dweller in our city and towns, and especially the salaried class, are not equally well off, and complain somewhat of the high cost of living, but their complaint is in an undertone, and never before was the hope for the future higher throughout the community in general.

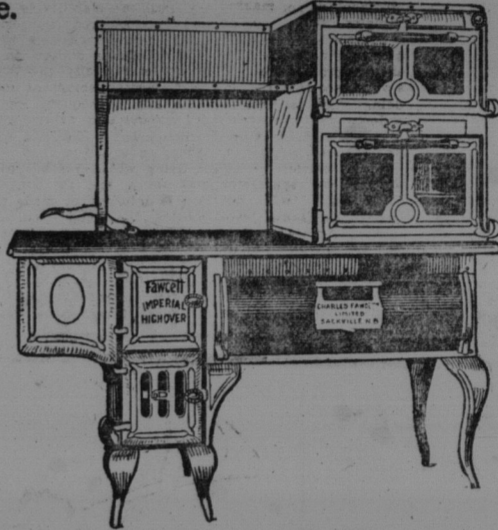
New interest has of late developed in the creation of local manufacturing industries. A joint committee of the City Council, Retail Merchants' Association, Board of Trade and Rotary Club, have the matter in hand. Local factories, impracticable before the days of the car ferry, now look promising. Rest assured that P. E. Island is still on the map and will appear in brighter colors within the next few years.

Editor's Note—The above was written by J. E. B. McCready, Publicity and Immigration Agent for Prince Edward Island.

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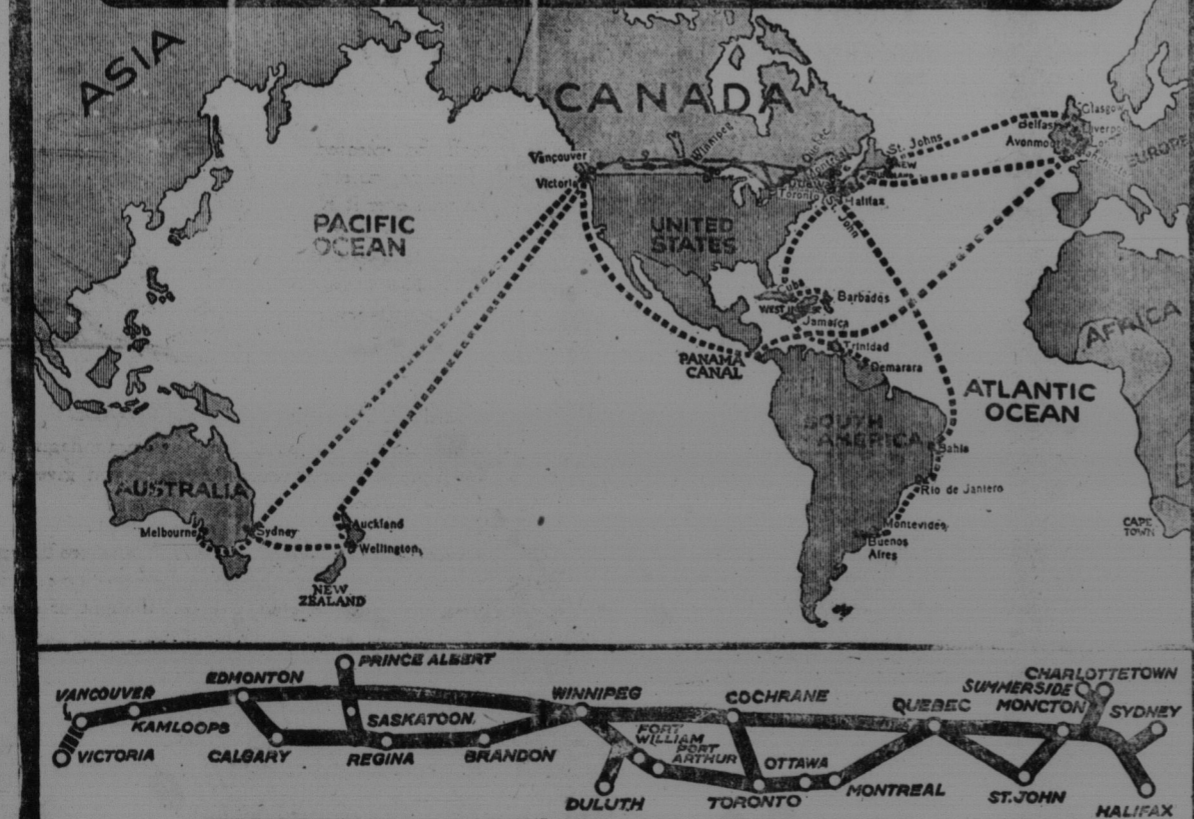
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