

OUR INDUSTRY---The Making of a Stetson Hat

SPECIAL TO THE EDUCATIONAL REVIEW

THE average wearer of Stetson hats has but the lightest, if any, conception of the vast amount of work entailed in their manufacture. He knows they are made of fur, but of the kind, how it is handled and the many processes it undergoes he has but the remotest idea.

The furs used in making Stetson hats are beaver, otter and muskrat from United States and Canada, nutria from Argentine Republic, hare from Saxony, and coney from Scotland and England.

The beaver, otter, nutria and muskrat are aquatic and it

is necessary to wash them thoroughly in a strong solution of whale oil soap and water to remove the scum and dirt with which the fur fibres are encrusted. The hare and coney do not require this preliminary washing in preparation for the first treatment.

Hare and coney skins are received at the Stetson factory with the hair removed, but the beaver, otter, nutria and muskrat skins, after being washed and dried, are brushed by machines and the long, coarse guard hairs are plucked, leaving the smooth, soft fur.

CHEMICAL TREATMENT.

The first process applied to the fur is that technically known as carotting. The object of this is to add to the felt-ing properties of the fur-fibres and make them mat more readily. Under a microscope the fur fibre is seen as a barbed shaft with scales. Carotting causes these scales to open, and they interlock when the fibres are brought together.

The carrotted skins are now taken to the fur cellars, to be stored for use as required.

FUR REMOVED FROM HIDE.

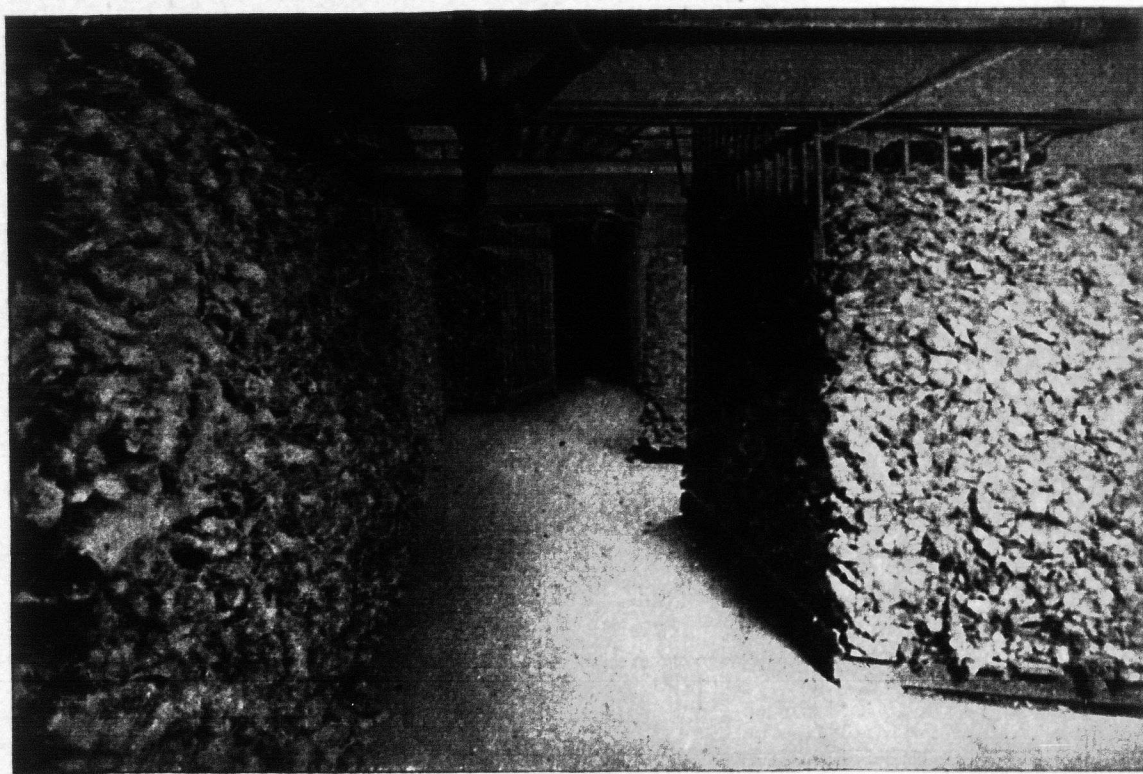
The skins remain in the cellars sometimes for many months before they are taken to the fur-cutting department. Here they are dampened and thoroughly brushed by machinery. They are then fed into a machine which cuts the hide into short strings resembling shredded wheat, the fur emerging on an endless belt in apparently the same form in which it entered

SORTING FOR GRADE AND COLOR.

As the fur comes from the machines it is passed to experienced sorters who carefully separate it for color and quality. The most valuable fur from the water animal is that from the under part of the body, while from the hare and coney the best fur is taken from the backs. The graded fur is now placed in five pound paper bags and sent to the fur storerooms.



CUTTING FUR FROM SKINS



FUR CELLARS