

**Commission of Conservation
CANADA**

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CONSERVATION is published the first of each month. 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 town-planning and public health.

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COMPULSORY TOWN PLANNING

Town planning in Great Britain has now far advanced beyond the experimental stage that it has now been decided to make it compulsory for every town, having 20,000 inhabitants or more, to submit a town planning scheme for its own area to the Local Government Board, not later than 1926. Such a scheme must embrace the limitation of population densities per acre, define the portion of a site area to be covered with buildings, the character of the buildings, the lines of arterial roads and the provision of open spaces.

The British people realize that haphazard growth of towns leads to serious evils and they are determined to control it. In future, land will have to be developed so as best to serve the interests of the community, which, in the long run, is usually in the interests of the landholders themselves. Only the land speculator is adversely affected. If the public wish to put that individual out of business, they cannot do it more effectively than by actively promoting proper schemes of town planning.

In Canada, the province of Nova Scotia took the lead in making town planning compulsory in 1915. The only other province which has a compulsory act is Saskatchewan. These are therefore the only two provinces abreast of the Old Country in town-planning progress, though most of our provinces have enabling acts in force.

ELECTRICITY AND CIVILIZATION

The subject of water power is one of great interest in Canada. The benefits which we have a right to anticipate from our wealth in this valuable resource are being more and more truly appreciated in this country.

In connection with the value of water powers, the *Electrical World*, commenting on remarks by Dr. George Otis Smith, Director of the United States Geological Survey, states that, in the long run, the utilization of water power means the saving of human energy for purposes to which power-driven machinery is not yet adapted. The mere change from steam power to water power is not only significant of lower costs in manufacturing and

of the saving of the earth's stored fuel for its more important uses, but it relieves the labour necessary in mining the coal and the still greater burden of transporting it. Every water power harnessed and displacing steam power implies, therefore, a great band of labourers in the mine and on the railways freed from this particular necessity of toil for other and more useful work.

Now that the price of labour has risen beyond the wildest dreams of a few years ago, we are approaching an era when, wherever possible, human energy will be replaced by mechanical or electrical power.

If we are to attain a condition of production that will give us a chance of successful competition in the world's market, it must be through the most determined efforts at cheap power production and all possible saving in the field of human labour. The great power enterprises of the present day give opportunities such as have not yet been realized.—L. G. D.

KEEP THE WEEDS DOWN

Weeds will grow where anything else will grow. If they are not destroyed they will ruin any crop. Survival of the fittest is an inexorable law of nature, and the weed, being propagated by natural methods, has an immense advantage in competition with a cultivated crop.

Constant attention is the only remedy. Once the crop is sufficiently above ground to be distinguishable, cultivation of the soil to kill the weeds should be commenced and should be continued till the crop is high enough to crowd the weeds out. This cultivation is also necessary for good growth as it permits the soil to retain moisture during dry weather and leaves the surface in better condition to absorb rainfall.

BARN FIRES

During the past two haying seasons many fires have occurred in barns, and these have been traced directly to the storing of hay in the barns before it has been thoroughly dried. The moisture in the hay has caused a fermentation and heating which has resulted in spontaneous combustion, and the loss of the hay crop and the buildings.

Hay should be properly cured before being stored. It may take a little longer and may sometimes be done at the risk of unfavourable weather, but it is much better to be sure than sorry.

A western mother writes respecting the business section of her town:

"Back of almost all of our stores are found horrible conditions; piles of trash composed of papers, packing boxes, sweepings and sometimes garbage, are found. These eventually constitute a rat harbour, fly-producing conditions and also a fire hazard."

UNSIGHTLY BILLBOARDS

Advertising, when properly directed, is no doubt a means of creating additional business for the advertiser. How the advertiser spends his appropriation—from the standpoint of securing results—is his own concern.

The medium by which he reaches the public, however, concerns the public, and the people are awakening to the fact.

Appearance counts. For this reason and for no other, all modern daily newspapers, notwithstanding that the greater proportion of their revenue comes from advertising, have excluded display advertising from their front pages.

When a private industry, so dependent upon its advertisers, can take a stand on behalf of appearances, how much more important is it that our public streets, the front pages of our city, should be protected.

The more public a situation is, the more eagerly is it seized upon for the erection of a billboard, and this regardless of the fact that it constitutes a deteriorating influence upon surrounding property, in many cases is a hiding place for a "dump" and often creates a fire menace of no mean proportion. Cities are spending enormous sums in the construction of good roads and sidewalks; merchants and residents, largely for the sake of appearances, improve their property fronting on same, that the eye of the travelling public may not be offended. Yet billboards and signs are permitted without control as to location.

It is high time our municipal authorities recognized their duty towards public amenities, and regulated the erection of signs and billboards.—J. D.

SLUMS AND UNEMPLOYMENT

"On the other day I saw a skilled Birmingham artisan working in his garden, and I asked him if he had a day's holiday; he said 'No, I have been out of work for three months, and I am enjoying my garden, the fresh air, flowers, the sun and the birds.' I said 'What would you do with your time if you were living in the slums?' (as he had done at one time). He said 'I should be dead!' This brought home to me the hopeless condition of men out of work living in a great city, with a small house, no comfort and no garden. 'I do rejoice in the work you are doing in Canada.'—Extract from letter from Mr. George Cadbury of Bourneville, to the Commission of Conservation, May 19, 1919.

We are better off in all ways not to have measles, whooping cough, scarlet fever, etc., in childhood, just as we are better off not to have lost a finger, an eye or even a toe.

Parents should be ever careful to protect their children in all known ways against every sickness.

**Forest Protection
on Ottawa River**

The report of the Ottawa River Forest Protective Association for the year 1918 shows that protection was afforded an area of 33,000 square miles, at a cost of slightly under 83 per square mile, or less than one-half cent per acre. The total of licensed timber lands within the Association limits is approximately 25,000 square miles, there being over 6,300 square miles of unlicensed Crown lands, in consideration of whose protection the Provincial Government made the Association a grant of \$3,500. The year 1918 was favourable for forest protection in the district in question, the total loss of timber on Association territory being 275,500 feet of timber scorched, and damage to other property valued at \$5,140.

The beneficial results of organization, special training and modern equipment in forest fire protection work are rapidly justifying themselves.—C. L.

Super-Power Plants

(Continued from page 27)

As pointed out in a report on *Electric Generation and Distribution in Canada*, recently published by the Commission of Conservation, adequate supply of electric energy in this section is confined to a few large centres. The smaller municipalities have installed small electric plants which are usually very expensive to operate and only give a night service. The rates which have consequently to be charged and the limited service prevent the full benefit which should otherwise be enjoyed from the various uses of electric energy. All these small plants through concerted action could be replaced by a few large and more efficient ones, each supplying a fairly extensive district by means of electric transmission lines. The cost of production would be reduced to about one-third and a better service supplied.

The example given in the above-mentioned report illustrates the possibilities in the Estevan district. A central power plant at Estevan would supply transmission lines radiating in various directions covering a total length of 150 miles. The estimated demand, based on the requirements of the near future, shows a total of some 600 h.p. outside of Estevan. As the lines would only carry a light load they could be built cheaply with light conductors and at a cost possibly not exceeding \$2,500 per mile. If we allow a load factor of 40 per cent the cost of transmission would average 2½ cents per k.w.h. The cost of production in the central plant would be from 2½ cents to 3 cents per k.w.h., so that the electricity could be delivered for an average of from 5 cents to 5½ cents per k.w.h. at the various small centres supplied. With a small plant, the present cost runs as high as from 15 cents to 19 cents per k.w.h. Numerous other districts, if treated in the same way, would probably show advantageous results.—L. G. D.