

**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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OLD GENERAL HUNGER

Mr. Hanna says Allied Europe is short 500,000 bushels of wheat. On Dec. 1 last, Canada had 110,000,000 bushels for export. On the same date, the United States, after allowing for the normal consumption of her own people, had not a single bushel, although Mr. Hoover thinks that, by economy and substitution, they will be able to export about 100,000,000 bushels. Where will Allied Europe procure the balance of 290,000,000 bushels to keep her from starving?

On account of the shipping situation it must come from America and Canada, as the granary of the Empire, must put forth a supreme effort. The farmer must have additional labour. He is doing his best now, and no amount of talking at him will induce him to put in a larger crop this spring. Provide him with extra help in seeding if you will, but he will not increase his crop acreage unless he is assured of enough help in harvest. Even in old-settled Ontario there has been for years a large acreage uncropped for lack of help. It is equally true that there are in our cities and towns many farm-trained men at work not as essential as farming, who would assist in the crucial periods of seed-time and harvest if the law protected them in their positions and possibly made up a part of the difference between their ordinary earnings and what they would receive as farm labourers. We have conscripted men for overseas; what are we going to do to feed our Allies?

Man-power is needed for fighting, for munition working and for food production, and whichever is the most urgent should have the most men allotted to it. In such times as these, it is given only to those in high authority to know conditions fully, but, if the food administrations of Canada and the United States portray things as they are, the food situation is the most serious we have yet had to face. It is only when the ordinary citizen realizes this that the problem can be solved.—M.J.P.

IN SYMPATHY WITH OUR WORK

"I am in sympathy with the great work you are doing", writes a rural minister to the Commission of Conservation, "and, as a country pastor studying and endeavoring to make my contribution to the work of conservation and reconstruction of Canadian life, especially Canadian rural life, I have been helped by your reports."

Conservation has its enemies as well as its friends, and a word of appreciation such as this is most encouraging.

A TRIUMPH FOR PUBLICITY

OVER a year ago the Commission of Conservation began an active publicity campaign for the adoption of measures to prevent the spread of venereal diseases. At the Eighth Annual Meeting of the Commission much attention was given to the subject, and by pamphlets and through the columns of CONSERVATION, which goes to every newspaper and every clergyman in Canada, the "hammering away" process went on. The campaign was taken up by influential newspapers, public organizations and public-spirited citizens. To-day we can announce that Saskatchewan has made compulsory the reporting of venereal diseases to the provincial health authorities, and it is stated that the Ontario Government will at its next session, introduce similar legislation.

**Burning Food Stuffs
While Europe Starves**

Heavy Losses from Elevator Fires in Western Canada

Attempts at conservation are frequently too concerned with the leakage at the spigot to notice the real waste at the bung. This is especially true of the destruction by fire of vast quantities of food products in factories, storages and warehouses. In a letter recently received by the Commission of Conservation, Mr. F. J. L. Harrison, manager of the Western Canada Grain Association, Winnipeg, points out that, during 1917, at least 50 country elevators, 2 hospital elevators and 2 large flour mills have been burned in western Canada. He says: "In these fires not far short of 750,000 bushels of grain have been rendered unfit for human use. This would be bad enough in normal times, but, under present conditions, the waste seems almost criminal. The United States Government, through its Food Administration bureau, is asking its

citizens to save wheat to the extent of 25 per cent of normal requirements, or about one bushel per head per annum. We, in Canada, may be asked to make a similar sacrifice. On this basis, our fire loss would absorb half the saving of the entire population of the three prairie provinces."

According to figures compiled by the Commission of Conservation, fires in properties most closely affecting our food supply numbered in the past three years as follows: Grain elevators 145, flour and grit mills 45, bakeries and confectionery works 59, packing houses and cold storage plants 26, canneries and butter and cheese factories 36, miscellaneous warehouses and storerooms 334, farm barns 3,746, and corn stacks 117.

The value of the food products damaged by these fires amounted to over \$15,600,000. At the present time when the welfare of Canada and her allies depends upon the conservation of every ounce of food and productive energy, the question of fire waste is one of grave importance and one demanding prompt remedial action. Records show that the immediate causes of fires are physical defects in property, carelessness on the part of occupants of property and incendiarism. The efforts of insurance companies, fire departments and provincial fire marshals, while worthy of commendation, are not resulting in any appreciable diminution of fires. As a war measure the Dominion government should appoint an official with power to enforce regulations for the prevention of fire in food products factories, storerooms and munition plants.—J.G.S.

TO UTILIZE OLD TIN CANS

Application has been made to the Board of Control, Winnipeg, for a four years' franchise to utilize the old tin cans accumulated in the city dumps. The project contemplates the separation of the solder, tin and iron in the cans, and the melting of the last-mentioned into bars.

MAKING CORN INTO HOGS

It takes 12 bushels of No. 2 corn to make 100 lbs. of average live hog under average farm conditions. This is the finding of the Commission appointed by the United States Food Controller to investigate the cost of hog production and to suggest plans for stimulating it. The figures given above are based on a survey of ten years' production, ending 1916. The Commission reported that, to bring production back to normal, it would be necessary to pay at least the equivalent value of 13.3 bushels of corn for 100 lbs. of average hog, and recommended that a minimum emergency price of \$16 per cwt. at the Chicago market be established immediately.

**Expansion of Mineral
Industry Essential**

Instead of Importing, Canada Should Export Mineral Products

Canada pays out more money for imported mineral products than she receives from her mines. The value of the mineral production for the calendar years 1913, 1914 and 1915 was \$145,600,000, \$128,865,000 and \$137,100,000 respectively. The imports of products of the mine and manufactures of mine products for the same years were valued at \$259,300,000, \$181,676,000 and \$146,224,000. As the imports also include manufactured, or partly manufactured products, they are much more valuable than the minerals we produce. If, however, Canadian minerals were turned into manufactured products in Canada, the present trade balance in minerals would be reversed.

It is only fair, though, to point out that Canada is under serious disadvantages in the matter of manufacturing. The relatively small and scattered population makes distribution from points of production to points of consumption both difficult and costly. Similarly, where, for example, coal is essential for reducing ore and for manufacturing, the cost of transportation necessary to bring the two raw products together, bears heavily on manufacture. Copper, zinc and lead are produced principally in Western Canada, while the manufacturers and chief markets are in Eastern Canada. In spite of these handicaps, a comparison of the figures for imports and those for production shows the opportunity that exists for developing a home market that will increase as the war goes on. Premier Lloyd George in his recent address stated that 'Economic conditions at the end of the war will be in the highest degree difficult. . . . There must follow a world shortage of raw materials, which will increase the longer the war lasts, and it is inevitable that those countries which have control of raw materials will desire to help themselves and their friends first.'

The mineral resources of Canada, if developed, could supply not only our own needs but also permit the exportation of a surplus to other parts of the British Empire. There is, in Canada, an urgent need for production to pay for our war debt and borrowings before the war, and if we are to get the greatest value out of our mineral industry it is necessary that our metals and minerals be refined and made into manufactured or partly manufactured products in Canada. The production of certain mineral products in Canada has been stimulated by the war and new industries created. In the period of reconstruction, after the war, it will be necessary to safeguard and provide for the further extension of these industries.—W.J.D.