

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 the proper conservation of the same, together with timely articles covering town-planning and public health.

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BRINGING OUT THE BEST IN THE WORKER

"Multiply by two every cord of wood consumed by the paper making industry in this country, and that much goes to waste." The man who said this runs a mill that cuts nearly 1,000,000 feet of lumber per day, and, when a man saws wood at that rate, he ought to be taken at his word. Sum up all the waste not only of the yellow pine, but of the forests of New England, the Middle West and far North-west and in the South Atlantic and Gulf regions where half of the nation's timber stands, then add the Canadian forests, and who can tell the total loss.

What about the human wastes in those same forests and in the mill towns and the plants where trees are turned into lumber or paper pulp? I have been told that two-thirds of the cost of the product of the forests is labour. If this is only partly true, the alert operator will surely welcome and pay the price for whatever methods will increase the efficiency of that labour even a little. Some are doing just this thing. They are improving the food and the shelter for the workers in the camp and giving better working and living conditions in mill towns and plants. They are after efficiency and they know that to get it the best in men must be brought to the surface.

These alert employers have done much to bring out the best in men, but the emphasis has been upon the physical. True, some attention has been paid to the mind of the worker, but not much. And as for the spirit side of men—where are the employers who have definitely tried to bring to the surface the best of that part of men out of which spring fairness, loyalty, integrity and good will. Industry needs the best there is in the whole man—body, mind and spirit, and the greatest of these is spirit.

Substitutes are being found for muscle, and automatic machinery is compelling the minimum of mind work; but no device can compensate for the absence of the right spirit in the worker. Industry cannot afford atrophied muscles and cannot stand the inactive mind of the automatic worker.

To bring out the best in the workers is a greater feat of conservation than to save tree tops, stumps and sawdust. If a generation ago a small part of the thought and money put into discovering mechanical devices had been devoted to the humanities of industry, great human wastes would have been avoided. Much in this direction is now being done by some, a little by many, but comparatively *nothing* is being done by a host of employers. And these latter are penalizing industry in general as well as themselves by neglecting the waste of body, mind and spirit which should be conserved for the sake of the worker, the industry and society.

WEED ERADICATION

WILD OATS

The weed problem is one of the most serious confronting Canadian farmers to-day. Some weeds are troublesome in every province, while others cause most loss where grain farming is exclusively practised. Wild oats are a terrible pest in the Prairie Provinces and must be dealt with earnestly in order to keep them under control.

Various methods are advocated for their eradication, but one of the very best is the fallow and fall rye method practised and recommended by one of the oldest and most successful farmers of the Northwest.

The infested field should be ploughed deeply (seven or eight inches if possible) as soon as spring seeding is over, and each day's ploughing harrowed or ploughed.

As each crop of oats appears it should be cultivated or disced up to the 10th or 12th of August when the field should be given a final preparation and seeded about Aug. 15th, at the rate of one and one-quarter bushels of fall rye and packed or harrowed after seeding. The oats that germinate with the rye will be winter-killed, and those coming up in the spring will not ripen before the rye is ready to harvest. The better the soil is cultivated and prepared to receive the rye crop the greater will be the number of oats germinated and winter-killed. If necessary this treatment can be repeated. Fall rye is a sure crop, the grain brings a good price, and it is the one crop which will ripen ahead of the wild oats.—F.C.N.

Fox Breeding Conditions

Opinion of an Expert as to Value and Quality of Pelts

Mr. Alfred V. Fraser, New York agent of C. M. Lamson and Co., London, England, the world's largest fur commission house, lately visited a majority of the fox ranches on Prince Edward Island, with a view to securing the pelts for his firm's sales. Mr. Fraser was impressed by the industry's stability and considers the fox in the domesticated animal list permanently. He believes that the production of large dark-coloured skins will not be overdone, and that for the next few years, the darkest animals should be kept for breeding and the lighter coloured culled out and marketed. The market prefers the black and nearly black skins.

Prices are much lower now than formerly but will probably advance again when the war is over. The average value of the foxes seen by Mr. Fraser is probably between \$200.00 and \$300.00. In several ranches, where the foxes are black or nearly so, and are vigorous and well grown, the average value is several times higher and, in a few instances, the skins of individual animals will exceed \$1,000.00. They are of higher value than the average wild fox because they are killed when prime, and are darker coloured.

Mr. Fraser believes that, to rear foxes successfully, the farmer must be a prime stock feeder and keep his animals growing thrifflily from birth to maturity. The practice in many ranches of restricting feed until the foxes are four to five months old he considers harmful. His opinion is worthy of consideration as he himself is a live stock breeder. He states that any defects in the food will be evident in the skin structures first, and the skin of any animal is the evidence of its feeding.

The stability of the industry was considered doubtful when the skins were placed upon the London market some years ago. Lamson's formerly held the opinion that, unless wild fox blood was continually introduced, the skins would deteriorate. Mr. Fraser is now convinced that no new blood is required as several ranchers had their foxes in uniformly excellent condition, and of an average size in excess of wild foxes, while the colour was very much superior to that of any wild animal.

Mr. Fraser's visit has done much to restore confidence among the breeders. He met several hundred fox owners and saw more than a thousand foxes. In some ranches he examined silver foxes bred from cross or "patch" fox parents, which were of good quality and

constituted a profitable enterprise considering the capital invested. This result is in conformity with the report made by the Commission of Conservation in 1912, entitled "Fur Farming in Canada."—J. W. Jones.

Training the Boy

Future Results Depend Upon Proper Direction of the Young Mind of To-day

Sir Clifford Sifton stated at the fifth annual meeting of Commission of Conservation: "With respect to the general progress of conservation ideas, it must be remembered that, in the last resort, the highest degree of conservation depends upon the efficiency of the human unit."

Many influences are operating to increase the efficiency of our people, and especially is this the case with that human unit—the boy.

To the boy of to-day we must look for future results. When called upon to undertake the burdens of civic and business life, the effects of his training as a boy will be apparent in his character and habits, his initiative and action. Canada's future greatness depends upon the proper direction of the young mind of to-day, and upon her leading men of to-day rests the responsibility of providing for this training.

Many voluntary organizations are devoting earnest attention to boy training. The Boy Scout Association is one of these. Young as this movement is in years, many rising young men of to-day show in their characters and habits the influence of their Boy Scout training. This movement, however, as well as similar ones, is hampered by the dearth of suitable leaders, many of whom have been claimed by the war. An English paper recently stated:

"On the shoulders of the Scoutmasters a great responsibility rests, for it is to them that is committed the important task of moulding the characters of the lads and teaching them those habits of thought and action that fit them for the occupation of a better and more responsible sphere of life. 'Scoutmasters,' said Chief Scout Sir Robert Baden-Powell recently, 'are the backbone of the movement, and the finding of suitable men is our greatest difficulty.'"

Canada will require of her future leaders a high degree of efficiency, and that this may be accomplished it is essential that the men of to-day become interested in boy work, and assume their responsibility as Canadians to the rising generation.

Many street accidents may be prevented by the provision of municipal skating rinks and coasting slides.