

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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ALLUREMENT OF SPECULATION

Few days pass when farmers, young and old, are not asked to invest in financial concerns, in speculations which dangle untold riches before their longing eyes. The agents are clever and persevering. They have a thousand strings to their bow. Town lots, mining claims, natural gas and oil wells, patents, are all means of enticement, all the more alluring since the risk which accompanies them is hidden more or less honestly under the name of some master of finance, or by an advertisement cleverly inserted in a conspicuous place in a newspaper of wide circulation. It is a veritable scourge, a plague. One must live in the country and hear the wails of the victims, to grasp the whole situation. I do not think that I exaggerate when I declare that in one county where I live, \$100,000 and more have simply been thrown away by our farmers. Some of these, seized by a fatal frenzy, have not hesitated to sell their beautiful farms, the heritage received from their forefathers, in order to barter the value for a scrap of paper which guaranteed them the ownership neither of an inch of land nor a pennyweight of silver.

Can this evil not be remedied? Is it necessary to leave the farmer to learn wisdom at his own expense by becoming the prey of greedy plunderers? Is it necessary to allow him and his descendants to be deceitfully allured from their ancestral calling and brought to ruin?—*Mrs. Choquette, at Seventh Annual Meeting of Commission of Conservation.*

Do not depend upon your land-lord to protect you. Inspect your home yourself from cellar to attic, and insist that unsafe conditions be made safe.

Canada's Fire Loss

Its Effect upon Production and Competition for Foreign Trade

The fire loss of Canada has reached enormous proportions. The drain upon her financial resources constitutes an economic loss which no country can afford and still meet competing nations on an equal footing.

The war has had far-reaching effects upon commerce. European countries, in greater or less degree, are realizing their latent powers, production is being speeded up, resources are being developed, trade openings are being sought and established. Prior to the war Canada found herself handicapped in any scheme of trade expansion by the lower cost of production in Europe. It therefore follows that, with the realization by European countries of their commercial possibilities, this trade handicap will be greatly accentuated.

On the basis of averages, and from the data available as to the cost of insurance and upkeep of fire departments, the following comparisons may be deduced:—

For the past three years the average rate for fire insurance in Canada has been \$1.18 per \$100 of insurance. The average rate in Sweden is .40, in Austria .30, in England .23, in Germany .22, in France .21, in Spain .19, and in Italy .19.

A Canadian employer of labour with 100 employees, carrying an insurance of \$50,000 on plant and buildings, and, assuming that \$2,000 insurance is carried or paid for by each employee on furniture and dwelling,—or a total of \$250,000—would, on the foregoing basis, have to provide in wages and overhead charges \$2,950. His competitor in Sweden would only require \$1,000, in Austria \$750, in England \$575, in Germany \$550, in France \$525, in Spain and Italy \$475.

For upkeep of fire departments Canada is heavily taxed in comparison with competing countries. In 1914, Paris, France, with a population of 2,846,986, had a total fire department expenditure of approximately \$56,479, or 23 cents per head. Toronto, for the same year, with a population of 470,144, spent \$675,146 on her fire department, equal to \$1.43 per head.

The Toronto manufacturer—and this is only an example for all Canada—has to provide for himself and family and for each employee and his family \$1.43 to cover fire department costs, as against the 23 cents his Paris competitor must provide; or, with an average of five to a family, for his 100 employees, he would have to pay in salaries and wages \$722.15 as against \$116.15 by his European competitor.

For insurance and upkeep of fire department the Toronto employer of 100 hands, as representative of Canadian industry, must pay \$3,672 against \$641 in Paris, a handicap equal to \$30 per employee.

The Census Report of 1911 gives 515,203 as the number of employees engaged in manufacturing in Canada; consequently at \$30 per head, there is a handicap of \$15,456,090 against Canadian manufacturers in the cost of fire insurance and municipal fire departments.

The salaries and wages paid to these 515,203 employees amounted to \$241,008,416, an average of \$467.80, or approximately \$9.00 per week. The foregoing handicap of \$30 per employee represents the wages for 3.23 weeks of each employee.

In 1910 the products of Canadian manufacturers were valued at \$1,165,975,639. This charge for insurance and municipal fire protection therefore represents an added tax of 1.3 per cent upon Canada's entire output of manufactures.

The fact that much the larger portion of this amount is buried in the pay-roll can be accepted as the reason why our employers have given so little attention to the question. The charge must be met, however, whether by direct or indirect means.

Employers complain of the rising cost of manufacturing; employees complain of the rising cost of living and demand increased wages. In view of the foregoing, employers should seriously consider reduction of the burden imposed by the enormous destruction of our created resources by fire—that their earnings may not be reduced by these charges, and thus remove one of our heavy handicaps before Canadian employers and employees meet world competition under the new trade conditions which will develop after the war.—D.

Do not allow combustible rubbish to accumulate in or about the house, but do not burn quantities of paper, or other rubbish in a fireplace or in the firebox of a stove or furnace. The ashes clog the flue passages, and the long flames are liable to overheat flues or start soot fires. Burn such material in the ash box below the firebox, where it can do no harm.

It cannot be expected that any appreciable number of people who have left the farm can be induced to return to it, but everything possible must be done to make farm work, the farm home and farm surroundings so attractive and profitable that the boys and girls now on the farm will be glad to stay there.

Establishment of Basic Industries

Developments in Mining Industry Show Concurrent Progress of Subsidiary Enterprises

The remarkable economic conditions created by the war have revealed the immensity of the unsuspected industrial opportunities in Canada. Facts, hitherto unknown or disregarded, are now being considered by the manufacturer, producer and the public with a view to securing greater scientific application, accuracy and economy in industry and the maximum return to Canadian capital and labour. While it is essential to investigate and initiate methods to eliminate waste in production, it is equally important to study the waste in industry due to purely economic conditions and to promote the more efficient utilization of our natural resources to the advantage of the nation.

On account of the comparatively small population of Canada, and the consequently limited home market for our products, basic rather than subsidiary industries should be primarily encouraged. This object having been achieved, subsidiary industries will naturally develop.

Recent developments in the mining industry, the products of which are essential to nearly all forms of manufacturing, exemplify the concurrent growth of basic and subsidiary enterprise. The progressive policy of the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company, Trail, B. C., furnishes a specific instance. For several years this company has mined and smelted lead ores, and operated the only large lead refining plant in Canada. Since the war three large Cottrell plants have been installed and are recovering valuable mineral from the smelter gases. Owing to the demand for zinc and copper in the manufacture of munitions, the company has recently installed a zinc plant, and is also contemplating an electrolytic copper refining plant.

As the zinc process depends upon a supply of sulphuric acid, the company has just completed a sulphuric acid plant, having a capacity of 10 tons of acid per day. The sulphuric acid is made from fume collected from the smelter. Five tons of acid will be used in the lead and zinc refineries and the remainder for commercial purposes. A portion of the sulphuric acid and refined zinc will probably be used in the manufacture of galvanized iron in British Columbia.

The foregoing developments, actual and proposed, form a splendid example of how the establishment of a basic industry may lead to the growth of subsidiary undertakings.—W. J. D.