

Saving the Forests of Ontario from Fire

Effective Measures Now in Force to Save the Remnant of the Woodlands of the Banner Province

Great strides towards effective forest fire protection were made in Ontario last year, under the Provincial Forestry Branch, notwithstanding that the transfer of authority over this work was not made until a relatively late date. About 1,100 men were engaged in this important work, including fire rangers, inspectors and head office supervision. The organization is to be further extended during the coming season, and the supervision will be stricter. Increasingly efficient results may be expected from year to year, as the men become better trained and incompetents are weeded out.

A total of 1,110 fires were reported, of which 68 per cent occurred before July 1. Of the fires attributable to railways, 60 per cent occurred along the National Transcontinental. Settlers clearing land were charged with 91 fires, and neglected camp fires with 154.

The total area burned over was 384,164 acres, of which 19 per cent was timber land, 39 per cent cut-over land, 20 per cent young forest growth, and 21 per cent barren. The total amount of timber damaged was estimated at about 15 million feet, in addition to 91,246 cords, mostly pulpwood, and 781,685 ties.

Material progress has been made in the construction of permanent improvements, such as lookout towers, trails, telephones and portages. A beginning has also been made in securing the disposal of logging slash where this constitutes a danger to life and personal property, as is frequently the case in the clay belt. Some 3,500 permits were issued for the burning of settlers' clearing slashes. This means a very great reduction in the danger of fire escaping and causing damage, to say nothing of loss of life.

Ontario has now definitely taken its place alongside the other governmental agencies throughout Canada that are adopting up-to-date methods of organization and policy for the reduction of the enormous forest fire losses which have proved so costly in the past.—C.L.

PROPAGATING WHITEFISH

The State fish department of Michigan each spawning season catches a large number of whitefish to supply their several hatcheries with spawn. It has been found that this is a better way of propagating the fish than to let them spawn naturally, for the reason that carp and other 'cannibal fish' eat the spawn in the natural haunts, while, in the hatcheries, the spawn is, of course, protected until the young fish are large enough to protect themselves.—*The Fish-ing Gazette.*

U. S. Food Board Upholds Game Laws

Says Letting Down the Bars Would Destroy Valuable National Asset

The United States Food Administration has carefully considered increasing the food supply by relaxing the game laws and has decided against such a course. In a statement recently issued it refers to the strenuous efforts made by the various States to husband and increase the game supply, to the action of Congress in concluding a Migratory Birds Treaty with Canada to further the same purpose, and states that "it has reached the conclusion that the maximum supply can best be obtained by constantly increasing the breeding reserve of game under present and even more progressive laws directed toward that end. . . . Any effort to weaken the present laws or in any way relax them in one locality would immediately lead to a demand for such relaxation of laws in all other localities insuring a rapid breakdown of the whole legal structure of present game protection erected after efforts extending over numerous years.

"Once the perfected laws were relaxed to the point where game could be killed more freely, notwithstanding the fact that numerous gunners have gone to war, the game would be quickly destroyed by largely increased numbers of local gunners using modern methods of transportation and high-powered fire-arms. The present game supply of the country should be considered in exactly the same way as that of domestic stock and fowls, the breeding reserve of which should be increased to insure increased supplies for food. . . . Since an attempted relaxation of laws would tend toward a rapid destruction of game, no emergency has as yet arisen sufficiently acute to warrant the Food Administration advocating the destruction or impairment of game which forms a valuable national asset."

Relaxation of Game Laws

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on all occasions, food conservation has no meaning and any relaxation of the game laws would simply legalize their destructive tendencies to the detriment of the rights of game and the rights of those who are accustomed to observe the law.

"The amount of wild meat that would be obtained would be comparatively small, but the destruction involved in obtaining it would affect, in the most serious manner possible, the future of our game animals. In cases of absolute want or necessity it is always possible for the provincial game officers to make special arrangements under permit."

Factors in Production

5. Tillage to Save Seed

Corn, clover seed and some of the cereal grains are very scarce and high in price this year. On this account it would seem wise to prepare the soil well to receive the seed. If soil conditions are made favourable, less seed is required. Small seeds, such as clover and grass seeds, will give a higher percentage of germination if sown in carefully prepared soil which will permit of the soil grains packing in closely around the small seed, so as to convey the moisture necessary for germination. Any of the farm seeds, in fact, will germinate better in finely pulverized soil than in rough, coarse clods. Use the proper implements at the right time to most effectively fine the land. After the seed is in the ground nothing can be done that will wholly make up for a lack of cultivation before sowing the crop. While early seeding has given uniformly better results for a long period of years in experiments conducted at the Ontario Agricultural College and is thoroughly desirable, it is not wise to sow expensive seed on land not properly prepared. Good preparation of the soil must be combined with good seed and early seeding if maximum results are to be secured. Maximum yields are needed this year more than ever before in order that we may feed the Allies 'over there' and Canadians in Canada.—F.C.N.

VALUE OF GRAIN SCREENINGS

Three years ago the Seed Branch of the Department of Agriculture, at Ottawa, published a bulletin on the feed value of grain screenings, which included the results of feeding tests undertaken by the Experimental Farms Branch. Owing to the growing scarcity of feeds, the elevator operators have paid more and more attention to these screenings with a view to preventing the waste of any small or broken grains or weed seeds that might be used for feed. As a result, the lower grades of screenings are now composed almost entirely of very small weed seeds, which are very difficult to grind properly and are not relished by stock unless mixed with other feeds. At the present time, the Feeds Division of the Live Stock Branch is making a further careful study of the question with a view to obtaining the maximum benefit from this important by-product of the farm and the grain elevator. The results will be looked for with interest. The bulletin entitled "Grain Screenings," already referred to, may be obtained from the Publications Branch, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa.

Another Industry May Start in Canada

Manufacture of Safety Lamp Glasses Possible—Bureau of Standards Necessary

Previous to the war, the miner's safety lamp glasses used in Canada were imported from Germany and Austria. They are made from a special kind of glass having a high resistance against breakage from a blow, or sudden change of temperature. The material used in safety lamps must necessarily be of a high quality as a defective lamp may be the means of causing a mine explosion. The United States was also dependent on enemy countries for supplies of safety lamps and lamp parts, but, through the cooperation of the Bureau of Standards and the Bureau of Mines, these are now being manufactured in that country.

The price of safety lamp glasses has increased from \$6.50 per 100, before the war, to nearly \$10 f.o.b. New York. The demand for them in Canada is increasing year by year, and the present requirements are in the neighbourhood of 50,000 glasses per annum. There are a number of glass manufacturers in Canada and the production of these glasses would not only prove to be an additional source of profit to the manufacturer, but would also make Canada independent of foreign sources of supply.

Safety lamp glasses and many other imported products now used in Canada may, or may not, have been standardized in Germany, the United States and elsewhere. If it is intended to manufacture these products in Canada, it will be necessary, however, to provide some means for guaranteeing their standard of purity. The importance of this subject, and the increasing purchases made by the different departments of the government, demonstrate the value of a Canadian National Bureau of Standards similar to that in the United States.—W.J.D.

FOR FARMERS ONLY

A Handbook for Farmers is a very useful booklet that has just been issued by the Commission of Conservation. It treats of tillage, use of manures, seed selection, clover growing, the farm garden, weeds and insect pests, and other farm topics, in an informative as well as popular manner. The quantity is limited and the booklet will be supplied on request only to bona fide farmers.

Arrangements are being made by the Western representative of the Food Controller which are expected to insure a plentiful supply of fish for Saskatoon and Regina. Efforts will be made to make it possible for householders to purchase fish at 12½ cents a pound.