THE SILVER FOX INDUSTRY

THE rearing of silver black foxes in captivity, originally undertaken as an experimental side-line in agriculture, has within the past few years developed to such proportions that it has attracted the attention of practically the whole world. The story of its development from the experimental stage, when, some thirty years ago, in the western part of the Province, a few wild foxes were kept in captivity and their offspring killed for their pelts, to the present, with $26,000,000 invested, reads like romance. The details of this wonderful story have been written authoritatively, the bona fides of the industry as a commercial proposition have been investigated by the Royal Commission which visited Canada in 1914, and the evidence submitted on oath by competent witnesses has been published. This information, which is beyond the scope of the present publication, is available on application to the Provincial Commissioner of Agriculture or the Dominion Publicity Agent in Charlottetown.

Suffice it to say here that, in the first stage of the industry the problem of domestication was solved and the modern fox ranch created. The production was small and the rewards were gathered from the sale of pelts. Beginning in 1887 this stage covered a period of about twenty years. The pioneers made good profits owing to the excellence of the furs produced.

The second stage of the industry began about 1909, when the demand for breeding foxes became so insistent that the owners of foxes rather reluctantly concluded to sell them alive, as they were able to do to a limited extent, for about $3,000 per pair, some pelts being also sold at good prices. In 1910 the price of silver pups five months old rose to $4,000, and in 1911 to $6,000 per pair. Thus far the business was wholly in the hands of individuals and partnerships.

In 1912 the first fox companies were chartered and prices rose to $10,000 per pair. The flotation of companies was found to be profitable and a period of speculation and inflation set in. The trade in options became extensive and in 1913 prices went up to $12,000 dollars and in some instances as high as $15,000 per pair. During 1912 and 1913 many companies paid very large dividends to their shareholders, averaging 50 per cent. yearly over the entire industry, and rising in some cases to 100, 200 and 300 per cent.

In 1914 the silver fox crop was much

The Hon. JOHN ALEXANDER MATHIESON, K. C.

Premier and Attorney General of Prince Edward Island.

Mahieson, Hon. John Alexander, K.C., Premier and Attorney General of Prince Edward Island. Born, Brackley Point, P. E. Island, May 19th, 1863. Educated at Prince of Wales College, and after teaching for several years in grammar schools of his native Province entered the law office of Messrs. McLean & McDonald. Admitted to the Bar in 1894. Elected to the Legislature as representative of the Fourth District of King's at the general election of 1900; re-elected at general elections 1904, 1908, and 1912. Chosen Leader of the Conservative party in May 1903. On the resignation of Premier Palmer, Dec. 2nd, 1911, after the loss of his majority in the Legislature due to defeats at two by-elections, Mr Mathieson was called upon to form a new ministry, which he completed on Dec. 5th. At once appealing to the country his Government was sustained by a majority uparalleled in the history of the country. 28 of his followers having been elected, while only two of his opponents returned to the house. On September 15th 1896, he married Miss Mary Alice Laird, daugher of Hon. David Laird, first Lieut.-Gov. of N. W. Territories. Issue, three daughters and one son. Church, Presbyterian. Politics, Conservative. Is interested in Oyster Development Companies and is President of the Patricia Silver Fox Co. Ltd.