

Canada's Fur Trade Shows Development

During the War our Exports have Increased and Now Substantially Exceed our Imports

Much has been said and written about the lure of gold in stimulating settlement and exploration. In the history of Canada, however, it was the quest for furs that provided an incentive to the traders who threaded the tangle of lakes and streams, traversed the prairies and stormed the rugged mountain passes that barred the way to the Pacific ocean. True, the outstanding leaders in the task of exploration were fired by higher motives than mere love of gain. Nevertheless, the magnificent profits to be realized in the fur trade formed the economic basis which equipped and sustained the work of discovery.

Canada is not only a great fur-consuming country, but is also one of the leading fur-producing countries of the world and, provided we take proper measures to conserve our wild life, is likely always to remain so. Although here, as elsewhere, furs are often worn for ornament, our rigorous winter makes furs almost a necessity for many persons. The farmer who drives many miles to the elevator over the wind-swept prairies, appreciates the value of a warm coonskin and knows that no covering devised by the ingenuity of man is so effective in excluding the cold as the natural protection with which the wild animals are endowed.

Before the war, we were importing more furs than we exported. For the fiscal year 1913, our total imports of this commodity amounted to \$7,993,651 and our exports to \$5,415,119, thus leaving an unfavourable balance of over 2½ million dollars. During the war, we have had a favourable balance, small at first, but rising to \$9,214,584 for the fiscal year 1919. For that year our exports amounted to \$13,737,621 and our imports to \$4,523,037. The increased value of our exports is largely due to the enormous rise in prices but also indicates a considerable increase in the number of pelts exported. It is gratifying to note that, in spite of the higher prices, our imports have actually decreased in value. This would seem to indicate that there is an increasing domestic consumption of our own furs.

In 1913, our imports from the United States were \$4,228,456 and our exports to it, \$2,343,183, showing a trade balance in favour of the States of \$1,885,273. For the fiscal year ended March 31, 1919, the figures, as given in the Annual Report of the Dept. of Trade and Commerce, are: imports, \$3,801,605; exports, \$9,743,464; balance in Canada's favour, \$5,941,859.

Our imports from Great Britain have declined from \$1,294,462 in 1913 to only \$148,456 in 1919. Meanwhile, our exports have increased from \$2,795,791 in 1913

to \$3,763,955 in 1919. Taking into consideration the rise in prices, these figures indicate an actual decrease in quantity.

Undressed furs form much the largest item in our exports, over 98 per cent of the whole, and also about 78 per cent of the imports.

In Russia, in pre-war times, great fur sales were held at Irbrit, Nijn-Novgorod and Moscow. In Germany, the great market was Leipzig, where the big Easter fair used to attract fur-buyers from all parts of the world. Montreal should take its place beside these centres as a great fur market and the Montreal Fur Sales Board seems to have selected a propitious moment for launching the enterprise, before the channels of trade, which have been dislocated by the war, again settle down into well-worn grooves.

Methods to Protect Windows from Fire

Essential Qualities of Good Shutters—Every Building Has Own Peculiar Fire Problem

The types of modern window protection from fire may be divided into three classes, namely, water jets or open sprinklers, metallic shutters, and metal or metal-covered frames in combination with wired-glass. Open sprinklers, or "water-curtains" have been subjected to no very severe tests, although they are often advocated even to the exclusion of shutters. This dependence does not appear to be justified, as water is diathermanous and permits radiant heat to pass through it readily. The greatest value of open sprinklers lies in the reinforcement they provide for other measures of window protection, such as fire-resistant shutters and wired-glass windows.

Shutters have proved their efficiency in many fires, but they are unsightly. For rear walls of warehouses and factories they may be unobjectionable, but, in a building occupied by tenants, any systematic method of closing them would be hardly practicable. A further objection is the fact that, if such shutters are closed at night, internal fires may attain serious proportions before discovery. Rolling shutters of the normal open automatic type do not possess these objections, but they are far more costly to install. Shutters in any form should combine the following requisites: (a) Fire resistance; this is dependent upon the material of which the shutter is made and upon the way in which it is installed. (b) The ability to resist radiation of heat. (c) Capability of being opened from the outside. The last-named feature is essential, that firemen may have access to interior fires or that the shutters may be opened to permit the escape of entrapped inmates.

Where the danger of exposure is not sufficient to necessitate the use of shutters, or, if their appearance is objectionable, wired-glass in metal or metal-covered

frames forms a more pleasing though less efficient type of protection. Wire-glass windows, however, readily admit radiant heat, and are not to be recommended for severe exposures unless used in combination with shutters or outside sprinklers.

As a rule, with light exposures of first-class construction 75 feet or more distant, open sprinklers should be sufficient, except for a risk particularly dangerous in itself. If the exposure is moderate at 40 or 50 feet and the building is not specially hazardous, wired-glass would be preferable. If the exposure is severe and within 25 to 40 feet, tin-covered shutters should be used where attractive appearance is not essential. If the exposure is less than 25 feet distant, tin-covered shutters in combination with wire-glass or open sprinklers may be used.

Canada's Stake in Pulpwood Industry

Business Shows Rapidly Increasing Investment and Large Export Trade

From April, 1914, to August, 1919, Canadian pulp and paper companies floated a total of \$40,752,876 of various forms of securities. Of this amount, \$1,199,876 only was placed in Great Britain; \$17,800,000 was placed in the United States and \$20,753,000 in Canada. Of this balance of \$1,000,000 which is uncertain, probably about \$800,000 was placed in the States and \$200,000 in Canada. The \$20,000,000 placed in Canada was floated subsequent to November, 1917, the period during which Canada absorbed three great Victory loans.

The "Census of Industry" gives the total investment in pulp and paper mills in Canada in 1917 as \$186,787,405, being an increase of \$53,050,692 or 39.6 per cent over 1915.

These figures reveal that the investment in our pulp and paper industry is very large and that it is rapidly increasing. Indeed, it may be truly said that the manufacture of pulp and paper is one of our "key" industries. We must always import many commodities from foreign nations and these must be paid for with our own exports. Very industry which produces a large surplus for export is vital to the nation's welfare.

The researches undertaken by Dr. C. D. Howe for the Commission of Conservation indicate that pulpwood is of such slow growth that the trees of the smaller diameter classes cannot be depended on to reach commercial size within a period during which the lumberman can afford to hold his limits. This demonstrates that the provincial governments must assume direct responsibility for assuring the perpetuation of a very valuable source of revenue. The vigorous prosecution of further research is necessary that whatever regulations be framed may be founded on a sound basis.

Subsoil Waters are Valuable Resource

Need for Legislative Control to Prevent Depletion—Investigations in United States

In the Fraser River flats in British Columbia are a number of artesian wells. The total investment in the development of these wells has quickly grown to a considerable volume. Individual farmers, who were the persons chiefly concerned have created important interests in the underground water supply.

Several of these interests have been encroached upon by the boring of other wells in the neighbourhood, to such an extent in some cases that wells which formerly gave a good supply are now dry. This condition has brought a recognition of the need for legislative control. It is realized that the subterranean reservoirs are limited and that a consumer who permits his "gusher" to flow continuously is causing injury to his neighbours.

In the United States, this question of the conservation of underground water supplies has assumed great importance in certain sections. In Southern California it has been a fruitful source of expensive litigation. It is not only in semi-arid regions, however, that the depletion of subsoil waters has become serious. According to Dr. W. J. McGee, Secretary of the United States Inland Waterways Commission, "throughout the inland portions of the eastern United States, the average water-table has been lowered 10 to 40 feet, so that fully three-fourths of the springs and shallower wells have failed, and many brooks have run dry, while the risk of crop loss by drought has proportionately increased."

The same investigator has assembled the records of 35,000 wells throughout the United States and has concluded that "it would appear that the actual loss of water attending the lowering is 10 per cent of the aggregate volume within the first hundred feet from the surface—a national loss of substance comparable with the destruction of forests and the uses and wastes of petroleum and natural gas, and far exceeding the consumption and waste of coal and metal."

INTERNATIONAL TOWN PLANNING CONGRESS

Delegates, appointed by the Governments of Great Britain, France, Belgium, Italy, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain, Serbia, Greece, Egypt, India, South Africa, Australia, Canada, the United States, and the republics of South America, will be present at the International Town Planning and Housing Congress to be held in London during June of the present year.

The proceedings of the congress will occupy nine days, special trains being made available so that the delegates may have an opportunity to inspect the progress that has been made in housing schemes.