

Commission of Conservation CANADA

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CONSERVATION is published monthly. Its object is the dissemination of information relative to the natural resources of Canada, their development and proper conservation, and the publication of timely articles on housing and town planning.

The newspaper edition is printed on one side of the paper only, for convenience in clipping for reproduction.

The Commission of Conservation was created in 1909, by Act of Parliament, to promote the economic use of Canada's natural resources. Authentic information respecting the character and extent of such resources, and with reference to the problems associated with their efficient development and their conservation, is freely available on request to the Commission.

OTTAWA, FEBRUARY, 1921

Housing and Town Planning Conference

A housing and town planning conference will be held in Toronto on February 15th and 16th under the auspices of the South-western Ontario Town Planning Association, the Housing and Town Planning Association of Toronto and other organizations. At a meeting held at the City Hall, Toronto, on Thursday, December 30, the following committee was appointed to make the necessary arrangements: Mr. J. P. Hynes (Chairman), W. S. B. Armstrong (Secretary), Mrs. L. A. Hamilton, Mrs. Irwin, Controller Gibbons, Rev. Peter Bryce, and Messrs. G. Frank Beer, N. D. Wilson (Toronto Harbour Commission), H. L. Seymour, Thomas Adams (Town Planning Adviser to Commission of Conservation, Ottawa), Gordon Philip (London), W. H. Breithaupt (Kitchener), with representatives to be appointed from Hamilton and Bradford.

The principal subjects to be discussed will be:—

- (1) Practical steps to be taken in promoting town planning in cities;
- (2) Proposed town planning legislation;
- (3) Municipal finance in relation to town planning;
- (4) Housing;
- (5) The planning of Greater Toronto;
- (6) The formation of an Ontario Housing and Town Planning Association.

It is proposed to have an exhibition of town plans and dwellings in connection with the conference. The Commission of Conservation is co-operating with the local organization and will provide a large part of the material for the exhibition.

His Honour the Lieutenant Governor will open the conference on the 15th and a number of prominent speakers will take part in leading the discussions.

Copies of the programme and further particulars can be obtained from the Secretary, Mr. W. S. B. Armstrong, 307 Lumsden Building, Toronto.

Canada's Resources Need Development

At the annual meeting of a leading Canadian bank held recently, one of the speakers directed attention to the need for more thorough investigation of Canada's natural resources as an essential prelude to the greener development of these resources. The essence of his statement was to the effect that, in this matter of securing greater knowledge and greater development of natural resources, Canada should wake up.

During the past decade the staff experts of the Commission of Conservation have been engaged in the constant study of the extent and character of Canada's resources and of the problems associated with their more efficient utilization. Results of the Commission's studies have indicated very clearly that, in regard to many of the Dominion's most valuable resources, the interests of true conservation demand an immediate extension rather than a restriction of development. It has, therefore, been an important feature of the Commission's work to promote such development by giving the widest possible publicity to the data it has obtained relating to the extent, situation and character of potential resources. The publications issued by the Commission cover a wide diversity of subjects and have been compiled especially for the purpose of rendering them of practical value to the business interests engaged in the development of water powers, forests and other resources.

Forestry Department at B.C. University

An important recent development in forestry is the inauguration of a Department of Forestry in the Faculty of Science, University of British Columbia, under Prof. H. R. Christie. A five-year course will be given, during the first two years of which the instruction will consist of general arts and science subjects, as in the courses in chemical, mechanical, mining and civil engineering. During the last three years, the student will specialize in forestry, this being definitely recognized as a branch of the engineering profession. Prof. Christie was for a number of years in the British Columbia Forest Branch, also with the Canadian Engineers in France. He is a graduate of the Faculty of Forestry, University of Toronto. The establishment of the new School of Forestry at Vancouver should mean much in the future development of forestry work in the western provinces, particularly British Columbia, which has had to bring her forestry experts from outside the province. The existence of progressive forest faculties is largely responsible for the progress of the forestry movement in Canada.—*Clyde Leavitt.*

Marten and Fisher Kept in Captivity

Experiments of British Columbia
Fur Farmer may have Important Results

The success achieved in the breeding of silver foxes has led some fur farmers to experiment with other fur-bearers. The rancher has a great advantage over the trapper, in that he can kill his animals when the furs are prime and thus realize the best prices. As the best fisher pelts are selling for \$100 each, while marten may bring over \$50, there is sufficient financial inducement to rear these two related species. Unfortunately, the majority of experimenters have found it difficult or impossible to get these animals to breed in captivity, a condition which has been attributed to lack of exercise.

Mr. G. H. De Ley, Louis Creek, B.C., has succeeded in raising two generations of marten on his ranch. From a pair of wild martens, he raised a litter of 3, two females and one male; when one year old the young females gave birth to 2 and 4 young, respectively, and all were raised to maturity. Mr. De Ley has supplied the Commission of Conservation with the following account of his methods, which should prove interesting to fur farmers everywhere, as well as to all persons interested in the protection and conservation of wild life:—

"My opinion on the raising of marten and fisher is that they are too much petted and generally too much confined. These animals require much larger runs than generally recommended and, considering the actual value of their fur, it may be possible to allow, say, 1/20 acre per animal and still be profitable to raise them.

"The runs should be provided with obstacles and hiding places in the shape of hollow logs, stone and brush piles, scrubby or low-growing trees or bushes or some tall weeds. Sweet clover, for example, may be encouraged to grow inside the enclosure. There should be also running water or a concrete trough about 4 feet in diameter in each pen, this trough to be provided with inlet and overflow pipes. The enclosure should be boarded close up to about 3 feet to prevent undue excitement, and netting further up to 6 or 8 feet.

"Outside the enclosure should be planted some shade trees cut back to about 8 feet above the ground to induce the branches to spread out and provide a thick shady growth. Alder, birch, cedar spruce and poplar are very good for this purpose.

"The animals should not be made too tame and should not be fed three times a day regularly. Food should be provided either in two meals a day or a full day's ration at once; this will keep them more active and on the lookout and consequently keep them in better breeding conditions.

"In my opinion no harm will result in withholding food for one day and feeding them double rations the next. In the wild state, these animals remain several days without food and then, after a successful hunt, will fill themselves to capacity.

"In captivity, when hungry, the animals will run around the enclosure and take any amount of exercise and, to supplement their activities, the food should be provided alive in the form of squirrels, woodchucks, chipmunks, sparrows, crows, gophers, etc."

Talc and its Uses

One of Our Most Adaptable Non-Metallic Minerals

Among Canada's more useful non-metallic minerals, talc is probably the most adaptable and widely used, entering into the finishing process of some of the most common commodities.

Talc, sometimes designated soapstone, asbestos, French chalk, mineral pulp, talcay and verditite, is found in Cape Breton and Inverness counties in Nova Scotia; Frontenac, Hastings, Leeds, Lennox and Renfrew counties and Kenora district in Ontario; Beauport, Brome and Megantic counties in Quebec, and in the Leech River section of the Victoria mining division of British Columbia. In colour it ranges from white to greyish green, while to the touch it has a soft and apparently greasy or slippery feeling. It is a non-conductor of heat and electricity and is resistant to most chemical action.

Its chief uses are as a filler in the finishing of book papers and as a dressing for white cottons, also in the finishing of window blind cloth. Talc is largely used in the manufacture of rubber goods and to overcome the friction between inner tubes and covers of bicycle and automobile tires. Finely powdered white talc is used in the making of enamel and other paints, while the poorer grades are dusted on roofing paper and tar felts before rolling, to prevent sticking.

In the preparation of toilet articles, however, talc is most generally known, being the base for talcum powders, tooth pastes and powders, shoe, glove and other lubricating powders, and as a filler or loader for the cheaper grades of toilet soap.

The coarser grades of talc are used for electric switchboards, laboratory table tops, sanitary fittings stove and furnace linings and acid tanks, as a dressing for fine leathers and as a lubricant.

Talc, owing to the ease with which it can be carved, is often used in the production of statues and ornaments, and can be sawn into slabs for surfacing. The adaptability of talc is constantly finding new uses for it, and an increasing production is evident. In 1919 18,642 tons were mined, of a value of \$116,295. The greater portion was exported to the United States and Cuba, but a considerable portion was marketed in Canada.