

TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH Silver Fox Farming



George A. Callbeck, Manager of the Fur Marketing Department of the Canadian National Silver Fox Breeders' Association, has spent the past week in New York looking over the fur markets there with particular reference to silver fox, and will sail from that port next week for London, where he will attend the auctions of the Hudson's Bay Company, Anning & Cobb, C. M. Lamson & Company and London Fur Sales.

George believes thoroughly in records and why shouldn't he, as the Callbeck reputation has been built up on pure breeding. His father, Joe Callbeck, was making a name for himself as a breeder many years before silver foxes were thought of, and then when he turned his hand to the fox game was no time going to the front. George, profiting by the example of his father and probably improving on his methods—has been an outstanding example of what care and selection, together with a knowledge of the requirements, can do in improving a herd. Last season Callbeck foxes were probably at their best, and in the competitions at Amherst fox show demonstrated class of a high order.

Anything that George writes then is worthy of noting. For instance, he says that to get quality is a worthy ambition, and with the price of raw fox furs down 20 per cent from January of last year, it becomes even more necessary than ever that we get suitable fox foods at as low cost as possible. Now if we try to find an answer to the very important question as to how we can produce silver fox furs of choice quality at smaller feed cost, it appears from what we know of the sections of fox ranching in the Scandinavian countries that potatoes and fish might well be among the foods to receive consideration.

The Norwegian feed considerable fish in addition to wheat meal, such fish foods being used as a substitute for meat; while boiled potatoes, according to later reports, may be fed as a substitute for cereals to the extent of one to two ounces per fox per day. The price of potatoes here in Canada is usually small compared with that of cereal food, and if it is found that they or other foods of reasonable cost can be successfully used in the fox diet it would be of benefit to the industry.

With regard to quality in furs we may remark that there is perhaps no one word that so approaches complete description of quality in a silver fox fur as the word "beauty". A beautiful skin is sharply defined in both its black and its silver coloring. The con-

trast is most pleasing to the eye. Any deficiency or local blackness in the volume of fur, be it on the back, neck, sides, belly or hump, detracts from its quality and of course from its beauty, while a generous covering of fine dark slate underfur giving volume to the pelt and also support to guard hair of good color, length, and texture, makes a valuable addition to this thing of beauty—a choice silver fox skin. Other features which a breeder would possess are size of pelt and weight of leather. These surely do not lessen the beauty.

As the ultimate value of the foxes is in their furs they must have the good features found in quality furs. Further, foxes to be used as breeders should be of good bone structure and conformation with the distinctive characteristics indicative of sex; the male, those of size and vigor, while the female, with more fineness in appearance, may be somewhat smaller than the male.

The production of uniform good quality in foxes as in other breeds of live stock has its foundation in selective breeding of animals of definite type usually confined to some well bred strain, line or family. Suitable breeding stock is the foundation on which is to be reared, through care and feeding, herds of quality foxes. One of the best short cuts to the breeding of quality foxes is through polygamous mating. By this system a select male, line bred from a good family, may be used to good advantage if the breeding be judiciously considered with one or more quality animals of the same type and strain. In this connection we mean line-breeding, and this does not include all the various forms of cousin matings.

Let us realize that quality in furs, properly speaking, does not mean price, although price is dependent to a large extent upon quality. Prices also depend upon a number of factors in addition to that of quality such as "the excitement" of high-class silver foxes upon supply and upon demand. Demand is the direct result of the craving of women of wealth and fashion to be attired in style. Discreetly chosen generations past occasionally appear as if they were brand new inventions and again become fashionable. Should changes in fashion come about by which designers revert to more conservative lines, more beauty in contrast in lieu of the full silvers that may soon be overdone, it would not seem unlikely that furs darker than three-quarters may again become more sought after than those of lighter color phases.

It is interesting to note the trend for the past six years in the percentage distribution of the different color phases as learned from reports of two of the large London sales houses. In 1932 they were 8.8% of the whole; in 1933, 12.8%; in 1934, 18.1%; in 1935 they were 17% and this year at the January sales they had risen to 23%. The percentage of three-quarters was, with only slight variations, around an average of 33 1-3% of the whole offering. The halves and also for the same years at a fairly uniform average of about 28% of the whole, dropping in January of this year to 24%. The greatest falling off is in the percentage of silvers that have dropped from 17.3% to 4%, and in the blacks and slightly silveries from 10.2% of the whole to 2% in January of this year.

So, whatever type a rancher may favor as silvers his particular idea of beauty, it would seem to be a rational thing to try to meet the demands of the market which at the present are strong for very silvery furs and these, if of good size, color, volume of fur and leather, will yet command good prices.

Though somewhat of a diversion from a talk on silver foxes we may mention the report of a sale of nine platinum fox skins at Oslo, Norway, for an average of \$304.00 each. These were bought by Marcel Krummer of Argentina, who claims that undoubtedly he can, at Buenos Aires, sell them to good advantage. But these skins are rather freaks than silvers and are priced as such. They are also freakish.

In concluding his address Mr. Callbeck says: "I have good reason to believe that the efforts of the Association Field Service, working with the different provincial government fieldmen in the common cause of bettering the conditions of Canadian ranchers, will meet success. We trust they will keep prominently in mind the idea of having our breeders severely cut their stock and improve their herds with high class breeders of whose good breeding they should have ample proof so that the product of their herds may be skins beautiful in volume, beautiful in contour, color, size and general finish, and with a weight of hide in keeping with its other qualities."

Peter G. Clark, Manager of the Prince Edward Island Fur Pool, Limited, has compiled some very

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Text Of Mr. Bennett's Statement On Retiring From Party Leadership

Following is the text of the official statement of Mr. Bennett in resigning leadership of the Conservative party at the conference of delegates at Ottawa on March 6: "All the medical men whom I have consulted at home and abroad agree that the action of my heart is impaired, and that the condition, thought to be temporary when I was ill in 1935, has become permanent. They also agree that this condition necessarily involves drastic limitations upon my activities. When I returned from Europe in August last year, I advised my conferees in the House of Commons that, on medical advice, I was unable to continue as leader, but in view of the pending Ontario election and the practical difficulties of holding a convention last year, I agreed to remain until appropriate action could be taken."

"I am now reluctantly compelled to relinquish the position entrusted to me at the Winnipeg convention in 1927. I sincerely appreciate the confidence placed in me by my fellow Canadians and the generous support they accorded to the Government in a period of great difficulty. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity thus afforded to me to render some service to Canada."

R. S. White, member for Montreal St. Antoine-Westmount, the oldest member of the House of Commons, rose a few seconds after Mr. Bennett sat down. In a voice made partly inaudible by emotion he expressed the party's thanks to its retiring leader and his personal admiration for Mr. Bennett. The conference named Mr. White chairman of a committee to prepare a testimonial, its form undecided to Mr. Bennett.

Establishment of a National Conservative Council to coordinate the organization of the Conservative Party was approved when the conference adopted the report of the organization committee headed by Hon. Maurice Dupre, former Solicitor-General.

The conference approved the recommendation for the appointment of a national party leader, to be chosen and appointed by the party leader. It was also decided to set up a new National Conservative Youth Organization to extend from coast to coast.

Rt. Hon. R. B. Bennett emphasized the fact that the success of the Conservative Party in the future depended largely upon the support from the women and young people in Canada.

The National Conservative Council will consist of Rt. Hon. R. B. Bennett as president, and six representatives each from Ontario and Quebec, and three from each of the other provinces. There will be two women representatives each from Ontario and Quebec and one from each of the other provinces. The Yukon will have one representative.

PERSONNEL OF COUNCIL The National Conservative Council, described in a recent statement as a temporary committee appointed until the permanent representatives are appointed by the various provincial associations, includes the federal leader, provincial leaders, the national organizer, ex-officio, and the following named by the conference Saturday: British Columbia: J. H. Morgan, Mrs. M. D. Bowden, Senator R. F. Green. Alberta: H. R. Milner, General John Stewart, W. P. Graham. Saskatchewan: Mrs. Willington White, J. F. Anderson, E. E. Perley, Qu'Appelle House member. Manitoba: Mrs. Josephine Trumble, Hon. J. L. Bowden, E. G. P. Baker. Ontario: Mrs. George Gopch, Toronto; Mrs. George Cocksbutt, Brantford; Gordon W. Ford, Toronto; Hon. R. B. Bennett, Toronto; William T. A. Thompson, House member for Lanark; Hon. W. A. Gordon, Haliburton. Quebec: Hon. Maurice Dupre, Senator C. Beaulieu, W. R. Bullock, Legislature member for Westmount; George Heon, House member-elect for Argenteuil. New Brunswick: Mrs. H. MacKay, Hon. R. B. Hanson, A. J. Brooks, House member for Royal. Nova Scotia: Mrs. A. L. Moss, Senator Louis Robichaud. Percy Black, Conservative leader in the Legislature.

Prince Edward Island; Mrs. H. Horn, Senator Kennedy, Senator J. A. Macdonald. Yukon: Mrs. George Black, House member. The new Council will have its headquarters in Ottawa and will direct its own internal organization. The provincial representatives will name their representatives on the Council who will act until provincial associations appoint the permanent representatives. Where possible, associations in each province are to be common to both federal and provincial fields. It was agreed there should be regular annual meetings for every association and permanent party headquarters in every province. Speakers will be exchanged among the provinces especially for women's and youth meetings. An extensive programme of publicity in the English and French languages was approved particularly in respect to the interest of women and youth. A press service is to be set up in Ottawa. Prominent party men will be invited to give addresses to be broadcast in both languages.

REPORT ON POLICY

The report of the policy and conference committee, of which Joseph F. Harris (Toronto-Scarborough) was chairman at the conference, was given by Gordon Graydon (Peel), the secretary, as follows: "After discussion, the committee unanimously agreed that the question of holding a national convention should be the first order of business."

All sections of Canada by province were consulted on the desirability of a convention and it was unanimously resolved that the committee recommend to the conference that a national convention be held. "Consideration was given to the question of the timing of the convention, and after careful deliberation and a canvass of the entire committee and after consultation with our leader, it was unanimously resolved that this committee recommend that a national convention be held at the earliest possible date in the summer of 1938."

Consideration was also given to the question of the most suitable place for holding such a convention, and after full discussion it was resolved that we recommend to the conference that the national convention be held in Ottawa.

The matter of preliminary arrangements is the concern of the organization committee, the finance committee, as well as this committee. Therefore, it was unanimously resolved that this committee recommend to the conference that a national convention committee be set up forthwith by this committee. (An amendment was submitted to refer the convention to a committee from Ontario, nine from Quebec, two from Prince Edward Island, one from the Yukon and three from each of the other provinces. This committee was not chosen but will be selected on consultation with provincial associations.)

There was referred to this committee an analysis of the opinion of the conference from all parts of Canada with respect to changing the name of the party, and after discussion it was unanimously resolved that this committee recommend to the conference that the name of the party be changed to the National Conservative Party.

"This committee recommends that every constituency be communicated with by Dominion headquarters for the purpose of inviting, receiving and correlating such resolutions as may be submitted by the various constituencies, with a view to the presentation thereof to the convention. It is recommended that the whole question of party policy be submitted to, settled and determined by the national convention."

"But in view of the urgency of the situation and having regard to the notable constructive achievements of the Conservative party under the able leadership of the Rt. Hon. R. B. Bennett, it is urged that the leader of our party and his associates in Parliament use every effort to retain for our producers the full benefits and advantages of the Empire agreements."

limit basis on all our offerings but have been forced to reduce limits on other items brought to light are the following:—That in the auction sales which began in London, January 6th and concluded on the 14th, over 10,000 silver fox pelts were offered by the several houses and 75% were sold. This offering comprised full and three-quarter silvers 85,000, half-silvers 26,000, quarter-silvers 7,000, black and aughtly silvers 3,500, and low grades not deserving of classification 9,000. Approximately 60% of the total offering was Scandinavian and 40% Canadian. The average selling price for all classifications was approximately \$26.00. This compares with an average of \$24.13 for the sales at Montreal on December 28th, and \$22.29 on the Montreal January sales.

New Clothes, Not Because You Need Them, But Just For the Thrill of it! You'll be thrilled by these smart new spring patterns



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