A Page for the MODERN FARMER

IMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH Silver Fox Farming

The annual meeting of the Canadian National Silver Fox Breeders' Association was held in the Royal York Hotel June 17, 18, 19th June 17th was devoted to meetings of the Directors, all of whom were present with the exception of Dr. E. H. MacDonald, Saskatoon Sask. Mr. J.J. Gillis, Merritt, B.C. and Dr. J. E. LaForest, Quebec P.Q.

The report of the Directors was an extremely gratifying one showing an overall profit for the year in the general operations of the Association of $600.000 and $20,-604.80 in the co-operative marketing department. In this connection it may be mentioned that up to October 1945, a total of 21,340 pelts had been sold and from November 1st, 1945 to June 1st 1946, 29,538 pelts had been sold. Over 30,000 pelts had been consigned and when they are all disposed of the amount obtained will be over $1,000,000 The Directors took considerable pride in this announcement which shows that the Association not only increased its volume of business but improved its financial position. The total amount to credit is $239,867.16.

Some amendments to the constitution were presented, one of which referred to fox definitions and very sensibly it was decided that in future both platinum silvers and platinums would be registered as platinums, with color phases dark, medium, light and extra light. This will prevent considerable confusion but does not interefere with live stock or pelt shows using the two classifications.

Report of memberships of the Association showed Prince Edward Island with 120; Ontario 82; Quebec 46; New Brunswick 23; Saskatchewan and Alberta 13 each; Nova Scotia 10; Manitoba 9 and British Columbia 4—a grand total of 320. A total of 5,910 foxes were registered in 1945 This season to date 251 ranch statements were filed showing 3,840 registered males and 9,755 registered females.

The marketing department report of Manager George A. Callbeck made a particularly fine showing. The 1945-46 fox pelts brought excellent prices White marked show pelts averaging $65.30 platinums $106.10, platinum silvers $96.93, pearl platinums $70.50 glaciers $72.90. The silvers and the balance of the white marked and platinums are being offered in the June auction at Montreal Altogether there were 3,340 show pelts consigned. Not only were the show pelts disposed of to advantage but many consigners wrote to the Association complimenting the officials on the excellent results obtained for their consignments which shows that the 24-year-old organization has lost none of its vitality.

The report of the fur committee which was presented by D. O. Stewart, Summerside was well received and indicated that the chairman and members were active at all times in endeavoring to safeguard the interests of the fur breeders of Canada. Members day was June 18th and there was upwards of 100 present. The meeting was brought to order by President George MacLeod who gave a very splendid address in a clear and convincing manner. Among those called on to speak was W.M. Ritchie, chief of the Dominion fur graders. He stated that the production of pelts in Canada was upwards of 185,000 in 1945 and that at the end of May of this year about 100,000 had been sold leaving 66,000 to be disposed of as compared with 40,000 last year. Our quote to the United States is 70,000 and it had not all been taken up.

Mr. Ritchie said that as far as he could figure it out the total production of silver fox pelts in Canada and the United States this year would be about 300,000 and that Norway would produce about 200,000 silvers and 10,000 platinums and blues and Sweden about 160,000 make a grand total of all countries of about 720,000. Upwards of 37,000 pelts have been shipped to the United Kingdom since January 1st and of these about 40 percent have been sold. He advised ranchers to cull ruthlessly and to keep only the better animals. He said that when London opened up everyone rushed pelts there expecting them to be quickly disposed of but that since British people owing to the 100 percent tax were not in a position to buy like they did after the last war. He said London would have to depend largely for its sales on exports to other countries.

Dr. Arnold H. Kennedy of the Ontario Veterinary College gave a fine address in which he emphasized the co-operation which his college was prepared to give to all fox ranchers and stated that to the curriculum had been added a course of lectures on diseases of fur bearing animals with the expectation of having graduates fit to take care of the requirements of fox and mink farmers.

Dr. A. A. Kingscote, of the Ontario Veterinary College spoke briefly also promising co-operation to the fur breeders An address was delivered by John Mahoney, manager of the Hudson's Bay Company Montreal. He stated that of the 26,000 pelts offered in the March sale in London, about 30 percent were sold including 300 platinums. He said that he believed there would be a great many more furs used for trimming because of a change in the United States regulations and of course that would mean that the lower priced silvers would have a better market London, he said, did not favor the light platinums, that the mediums were better taken up.

Joseph Connolly, Bathurst, N B President of the Dominion Fur Council and a large mink rancher was very glad of an opportunity to appear before the Fox Breeders' Association, officials with whom he had worked with in harmony in presenting to the Dominion government recommendations that would benefit all fur breeders. A vote of thanks was extended to Colonel J.L. Ralston for his assistance in connection with fox breeders' problems as presented by him to officials of the Dominion government.

All the minutes and speeches were taken down by Miss Olive Weir, Toronto, operating a stenotype machine This takes down words in syllables operates on a key system which takes in every known syllable in English. The operator can work at a speed of 300 words a minute if necessary. The machine has approximately 12 keys the use and combination of which make up the code. The keys work on a ribbon of paper and this is later transcribed on a typewriter.

Other speakers were J J. McCague, Alliston, Ontario; George Simmerman, Tavistock Ont; Heber McPhail, Cornwall; Gordon MacMillan, Cornwall; Dr. W. E Russell, Kitchener Ont.; L W. Hancock, Summerside; A. M. Doyle, Winnipeg.

Grants to five fox shows will be the same as in 1945 An appropriation of $5,000 was made for advertising purposes and Canadian Silver Fox and Fur was voted the official organ of the Association. An honorarium of $500.00 which had been made in past years to the retiring president was declined in 1945 by the retirnig president Lowell W. Hancock who suggested it be put into a fund for the education of young men in the fox industry. So far no satisfactory plan has been evolved to use it. When the matter came up for an honorarium for retiring president George MacLeod, Mr. MacLeod stated that he did not consider his services had been sufficiently onerous to warrant his accepting it and he thought it would be a good idea to dispense with the honorarium in future. It may be mentioned that President MacLeod spoke rather lightly of the work he had done, but all members were in accord with the view that he had been one of the best presidents the Association ever had. He never missed a meeting and his good judgment, calm and pleasing manner made everything go smoothly. It was a pleasure, each director remarked to have served with him.

The field work for 1946 was much discussed and after careful consideration the Directors came to the conclusion that nothing definite could be decided but that efforts will be made to place fieldmen where their services can be utilized if available. A vote of thanks was extended to the manager of the Royal York Hotel, to the press and others who assisted in making the meeting the success it was.

A pleasing feature was the banquet extended by the Canadian Bank of Commerce to the Directors at the York Club. The marvellous menu with delightful refreshments on the side put everyone in a very happy frame of mind and the Bank of Commerce certainly gained in good will by its kindly hospitality. The final and perhaps the outstanding function was the banquet given by the Ontario Fur Breeders' Association with the Directors and officials of the Association as guests Dr. W. E Russell of the O. W. Thompson Fur Farms presided very capably and called on various speakers who told in lighter vein of their experiences in the various activities they were engaged in or connected with the fox industry.

The complete list of officers for 1946 is:— R. S. Humphrey, Kensington, P.E.I. President; H. A. Doraty, Old Chelsea P.Q.; Lt.-Col. D.A. MacKinnon, Charlottetown P.E.I.; Gordon MacMillan, Cornwall, P.E.I.; D O. Stewart, Summerside; L.W. Hancock, Summerside; E. S. Burleigh, Ellerslie; Ernest Mill, Kensington; K. W. Taylor, Halifax N.S.; F. George MacLeod, Black River N.B.; F. H. Copp, Port Elgin N.B.; Dr. J. E. Forest, Quebec P.Q.; Dr. W. E. Russell, Kitchener Ont.; L.B. Pollock, Keswick, Ont.; R.H. McIlquham, Lanark Ont.; A. M. Doyle, Winnipeg Man.; Dr. R. H. MacDonald, Saskatoon Sask.; H.S. Jenkins, Aldersyde Alta.; Dr. J.J Gillis, Merritt B.C. Directors. Executive Committee:— R. S. Humphrey, President; H.A. Doraty, vice-president; L.W. Hancock, Lt.-Col. D. A. MacKinnon, Gordon MacMillan Registration Committee:— R. S. Humphrey, president; H.A. Doraty vice-president; R.H. McIlquham, Gordon MacMillan, A.M. Doyle, George A. Callbeck, R.G.T. Hitchman, T.D. Carruthers. Delegates to C N. E. S. R. Board:— W.H.C. Ruthven, Alliston Ont.; J.J.E McCague, Alliston, Ont. Representatives to Royal Winter Fair:— W. H. D. Ruthven, J.J.E. McCague. Fur Committee, President R.S. Humphrey; vice-president, H.A. Doraty; L.W. Hancock, Lt.-Col. D.A. MacKinnon, Gordon MacMillan, F. George MacLeod, E.S. Burleigh. Chief Inspector and Manager Fur Marketing Department:— George A. Callbeck Assistant Chief Inspector L.K. Lotterby.

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- NEWSY NOTES -

By AGRICOLA

THE NORTHERN FLICKER

This well-known bird belongs to the Woodpecker family but since its beak is built on different lines it gets it food in a different manner, as we shall see. The range of the Flicker is the whole of North America east of the Rockies, and very naturally its wide distribution is shown by a multiplicity of names, High-holer, yellow-hammer, golden-winged Woodpecker, Pigeon woodpecker, and many others. It is not an easy bird to describe, since it has quite a number of colors in its plumage, disposed in rather irregular fashion.

Northern Flicker. A.O.U. 412.2. Summer resident. Common, 1916; Decreasing 1946? Beak slightly curved. Top of head ashy-gray, a bright scarlet band across the back of the neck. Back, wing coverts and ignermost quills brownish-gray, thickly barred black. Tail coverts (upper) white barred with black; primaries black externally. Under surface of the wings and shafts of its feathers golden yellow. Tail black bove, yellow below tipped with bla.k. Side of head, throat, and upper breast, vinaceous. Male with a broad black stripe ("moustache") down each side of throat, from the base of the beak. Both sexes with a broad black cresent across the breast. Rest of the underparts white, tinged vinaceous and thickly spotted black. Length 11.0 inches, wings 6.0in., tail 4.0 in.

The Flicker is a prolific bird and the brood may number from five to nine. The nest is usually located in a hollow tree or sometimes (as I have seen) in a telephone post which has been hollowed by one of the other woodpeckers. Under the stress of finding food for its nestlings it will rob the cherry orchard if one be handy, but this seems to be its only bad habit. In its feeding it otherwise resembles the Meadowlarks rather than the Woodpeckers, having a decided predilection for ants which it searches out and captures on the ground. It has been observed also to thrust its long sticky tongue down the entrance of an ant-hill "to pick up the ants." Examination of Flickers' stomachs showed immense quantities of grasshoppers, beetles, moths, and other ground insects. The North Carolina ornithologists, H.H. and C.S. Brimley, remark on their fondness for peanuts, no less than sixty Flickers were seen in one small field. In the southern States they eat the fruit of the persimmon, black gum and dogwood and others unnamed.

MORE ABOUT RUSSIA

Last week author Koestler told of the Russians football team and its reaction to the civilities extended. This week his remarks take exception to the "Iron Curtain" which Russia has drawn across eastern Europe. When he says Russia he of course means the Government and he cites some striking instances of how it misled the people.

The Battle of Britain, the battle of the U-boats, the campaigns in North Africa and Italy were played down by the radio and press till they were barely audible; while the clamor for a "second" front gave the Russian people the idea that they alone were carrying on the war. The majority of the people had never heard of Dunkirk, Alamein or Bataan; what they did hear were "reports from Cairo" that Britain was seeking a separate peace, that American planes were dropping weapons to the Fascist marquis of Warsaw, and that the Allies were sitting back in their armchairs watching Russia lead to death. Nothing that the Western Powers could do or say, could influence Russian suspicions this artfully stimulated—for the iron curtain hid the truth. (Not quite, I think; for under pressure, the Soviet Government revealed o its subjects that the U.S. had supplied munitions and implements of war under Lend-lease,but the account was written in a way to minimize the action.)

What historical reasons, asks Mr. Koestler, prompted the Soviet leaders to create systematically, since 1918, this artificial "climate"? There were two reasons; (1) external, (2) internal.

The external reason is fairly obvious. The Western Powers had supported the armies of the counter-revolution during the civil war; they persecuted Communists; they waited hopefully for the movement to collapse and tried in every way to speed its fall; their reactionary press and politicians spread "shameless lies" about conditio is in Russia. "All this gave the infant revolution a kind of traumatic shock", which would in any case take a long time to live down. But the Soviet leaders didn't want the people to live it down. They kept ever present in the people's mind the memory of the "Capitalist Intervention," the slogan of the Anti-Soviet Crusade," the "Cordon Sanitaire," and so on, till it developed into an obsession. Why? This leads to the second, the internal source of this attitude.

To transform backward, agrarian Soviet Eurasia to a modern industrial nation was a gigantic task which imposed gigantic sacrifices upon the people; though it is noticeable that the leaders did not share them! The sacrifices entailed the exporting of food and raw materials to buy and import machinery; and the concentrating on heavy industry instead of producing "consumers' goods." The Five-year Plan in consequence of this, had the affect of lowering the standard of living, instead of lifting it. Here indeed was a paradox! The workers and peasants in a socialist country were worse off than the workers and peasants under the capitalist yoke! It would not do to allow the people any opportunity of making comparisons, so the iron curtain was lowered all round Russia!

No Soviet citizen was therefore allowed across the frontiers of his country—except on special mission; and he was forbidden to make friends with any foreign journalists or engineers in Russia. Nonfraternization with the outside world was the Soviet motto for a whole generation; the State monopoly in information and the stunt trials of foreign saboteurs, did their best to give the Russian masses their grotesquely distorted picture of conditions in the West. So much for the genesis of suspicion: What can we do to break it down? (To be continued).

WEATHER LORE FOR JULY

The well-known "Dog Days" begin on July 3rd and continue into August. The popular explanation of the name is that the great heat of this period disposes dogs to attacks of hydrophobia.

All over the Northern Hemisphere there is plenty of rainy weather shortly after the sun has reached its greatest summer altitude in the sky and is beginning to decline again. In southern Asia it brings the monsoon season, but here it brings only the rain so necessary to field and garden crops.

"A shower of rain in July, when the corn begins to fill,
Is worth a plough and oxen and all belongs there till"

The special days in July are the 13th 16th and 27th, the latter of which is "Old" St. Swithins' Day. All the sayings dealing with them point to the particular weather on those days as heralding a duration of similar weather.

"If the first of July (13th N.S.) be rainy weather,
'Twill rain more or less for four weeks together."

The 16th (New Style) was Bullions' Day, and the saying went—"If Bullions' Day be dry there will be a good harvest." And—

Bullion's Day, gif ye be fair,
For forty days there'll be nae mair."

A sufficiently ambiguous rhyme, which might mean no more fine weather for 40 days.

The special day dedicated to St. Swithin was (and to some extent still is) believed to have an influence over the coming weather. The belief is very old but later "weather prophets" have transferred its efficacy to the three or four days on each side of St. Swithin's. The general weather experienced throughout the week is no bad index to that of the future, they insimate.

"St. Swithin's Day, if thou be rain,
For forty days it will remain;
St. Swithin's Day, if thou be fair,
For forty days 'twill rain nae mair."

The old English rustics, when rain fell towards the close of this month, interpreted the sprinkling as "St. Swithin christening (baptizing) the apples!"

A WONDERFUL FLOWER

Dr. Joseph Arnold travelled in the island of Sumatra in 1818, in company with Sir Stamford and Lady Raffles. While on this journey the party arrived at Pulo Lebbar, on the Mauno River, and there Arnold made a discovery which is here told in his own words—I had ventured some way from the party, when one of the Malay servants came running to me with wonder in his eyes, and said, "come with me, sir, come! a flower, very large, beautiful, wonderful!" I immediately went with the man about a hundred yards into the jungle and he pointed to a flower growing close to the ground under the bushes, which (flower) was truely astonishing ..... but finding that it sprang from a small root which ran horizontally, I soon detached it and removed it to our hut." Here he was joined by Sir Stamford Raffles in measuring the flower. "It was of very great thickness, in some places three-quarters of an inch .....It measured a full yard across; the petals, which were roundish, and five in number, being twelve inches in length, and it being about a foot from the insertion of one petal to the opposite one." (Pictures of the flower show a central, bowl-shaped "nectary" a foot in diameter with the petals ranged round it). "The nectary in the opinion of all of us, would hold twelve pints, and the weight of this prodigy we calculated to be fifteen pounds."—

Specimens of this giant flower were sent to the Linnaean Society in England, whose President named it Rafflesia Arnoldi, in memory of Dr. Arnold who died shortly after its discovery.

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Farm Machinery Output Doubled

(By The Associated Press)

OTTAWA, June 27—Reconstruction Minister Howe said today Canada's production of farm machinery had jumped 50 per cent since the end of the war and now probably stood at least 100 per cent above pre-war figures.

Appearing before the veterans committee of the Commons, he said he believed that about 40 per cent of current production was exported and thought U.N.R.R.A.'s quota had been filled for the current year.

Clarence Gillis (CCF-Cape Breton South) held that the fundamental problem was not one of giving veterans priorities for the amount of machinery available. He asked that everything possible be done to increase production.

Mr. Howe said it was difficult to get the basic steel to keep the industry going. Certain parts of certain machinery were imported. Canada was wholly dependent on the United States for tractors.

"If we could make more pig iron we could make more machinery," he said.

Mr. Gillis asked how the production of pig iron could be increased.

"We are producing all the pig iron we can provide coke for," Mr. Howe replied. "We've cut steel production 25 per cent to put all available coke into the production of pig iron. All the blast furnaces are working on this."

Mr. Gillis: "Then what is the possibility of increasing steel production, by forming Crown companies, tapping new seams?"

Mr. Howe: "We are building furnaces which will practically double the production of coke but it will take a year to build them. We have under construction now a very large production of furnaces to turn coal into coke."

Says Munich Signers Bluffed By Hitler

NEURNBERG, June 25— (AP)— Baron Constantin von Neurath, onetime German foreign minister said today that signers of the Munich pact could have halted Hitler's aggressions with a stern diplomatic reproof after the absorption of Czechoslovakia in 1938.

The elderly ex-diplomat, describing the rapid-fire events of the pre-war years to the international military tribunal trying him and other top-rank Nazis on war crimes charges, declared he was still surprised that France and Britain allowed Hitler to get away with his Czech adventure.

When Hitler called in president Emil Hacha of Czechoslovakia and turned the German armies loose in that country in March, 1939, Von Neurath said, the Munich signatories sent only "paper protests".

"I had expected they would at least have recalled their ambassadors," he added. "The German people would have realized how serious the situation was, and Hitler would have avoided further aggressive action."

Lumber Output

(By The Canadian Press)

OTTAWA, June 26 — Lumber production by 782 mills east of the Rocky Mountains totalled 77,-048,000 board feet in April, compared with 106,422,000 board feet produced by 893 mills in March, the Dominion Bureau of Statistics reported today.

Shipments of 95,762.000 board feet were made by 412 mills in April, compared with 108,309,000 shipped by 404 operators in March. Stocks on hand at 290 mills at the end of April were 272,935,000 board feet, compared with 319,-904,000 feet at 217 mills at the end of March.

Of the 782 mills, 365 engaged in sawing operations producing 57,-982,000 board feet of softwoods and 19,066.000 feet of hardwoods, compared with 95,525,000 of softwood and 12,897,000 of hardwood from 378 mills in March.

Production for the four months ending in April totalled 371,906,-000 board feet while shipments were 385,181,000. Output in thousands by Provinces follows: (March figures in brackets) Prince Edward Island, 245 (168); Nova Scotia, 19,172 (13,540); New Brunswick, 9,663 (17,872); Quebec, 30,273 (27,-862; Ontario, 17,383 (9,965); Manitoba 2,252 (3,345); Saskatchewan, 3,342 (13,938); Alberta, 3,718 (21,-703).

TO VISIT CANADA

SYDNEY, Australia — (CP) — Sam Biber, president of the New South Wales Fur Traders' Association, will investigate fur farming and breeding in Canada for the state governments of New South Wales and Queensland.

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CHALLENGE TO CANBERRA

WHYALLA, Australia —(CP)— This little South Australian shipbuilding town challenges the claim of Canberra, national capital, to having the highest birthrate in the country. Whyalla estimates its birthrate at 40 per 1,000 population compared with Canberra's 27. Whyalla's population is 7,000.

CARNIVAL FOR ROYALITY

JOHANNESBURG — (CP) — Excitement at the coming visit of the Royal family to South Africa next year is mounting among the Cape colored population. Plans are being made to hold a special "coon" carnival similar to that held every New Year, and some teams have already chosen their garments.

Guernsey Purchase Extension Policy

To encourage the establishment of new Guernsey herds in this Province, the P. E. I. Guernsey Club with assistance from the Provincial Department of Agriculture, has initiated a policy whereby the following amounts will be paid to purchasers of registered Guernseys:

Calves under six months $15.00; six to twelve months $20.00; twelve to eighteen months $25.00; eighteen to twenty-four $30.00; two years and over $35.00, together with one half the freight on importations.

This assistance is open to any Island Farmer who at time of purchase has less than four registered Guernsey females.

As funds are limited applications will be considered in the order received.

All animals purchased will be subject to inspection.

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The largest bull sale ever held in Lacombe featured the selling of 212 bulls and 38 females. Total receipts were $54,406. Top price of $725 at the sale went to Frank Collicutt for his second prize Hereford bull bought by Jacob Dick, veteran. The champion Shorthorn entered by Sinclair Phillips, Ponoka, sold to J. A. Chinnery, Coronation, at $500.

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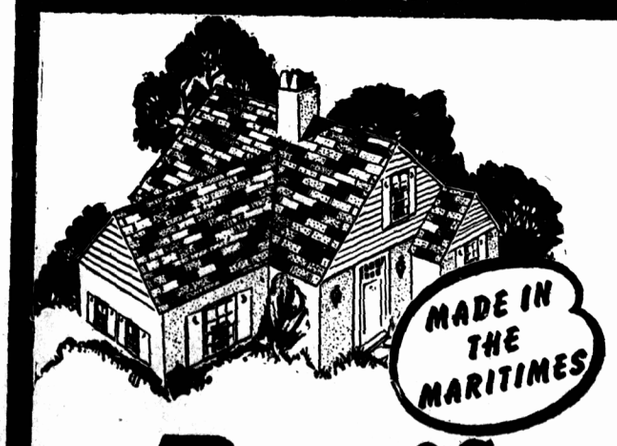

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