

TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH Silver Fox and Mink Farming



The two most distinguished men connected with fox farming in Norway paid this Province a brief visit Thursday and Friday. P. E. Owen, President of the Norwegian Fur Breeders' Association for the past eight years and a resident of Oslo, Norway, and Olmar Bragstad-Larsen, whose address has been since 1940, Harbor Springs, Michigan, but who has made long term visits to Norway the past two years. Our readers will remember that it was Mr. Larsen who arrived in the United States in December, 1939 with over 400 Norwegian platynums. Very little was known about them in this country although they were producing the Quebec type of platinum made popular by Dr. J. E. LaForest of Quebec City, Mr. Larsen made such an impression in New York with his pets and secured so much publicity that the auction sale was an astounding success. I. J. Fox buying the highest priced pair for \$11,000 and the second highest for \$5,000. They had been brought into the United States on the assumption that they were not dutiable, not being silver fox, which is the only dutiable type of raw fur coming into that country. Later the American breeders disputed this and litigation has since continued in the courts of the U. S. A. until recently a decision favorable to Mr. Larsen was given. It has been appealed by the American fox breeders association but the general opinion is that it will hold and that platinum foxes from any country will go in duty free to U. S. A. Just the same as cross fox, pearl platynums, red foxes, white foxes, etc.

Mr. Larsen is a man of forceful but pleasing personality and very convincing and as we talked with him we fully agreed that the future made by Premier J. Water Jones later that it would pay this Province if we gave him \$30,000 a year to publicize our silver fox.

During the few hours conversation we had with the above gentleman we learned the problems that have beset them during the occupation of the North and that in the war years protein, that is horse meat and even whole meat was practically unobtainable and fish was the principal source of protein plus 10 per cent of potatoes and about the same quantity of oatmeal made into porridge. We asked did not the fish tend to give us a sufficient amount of protein and Mr. Larsen replied no, we did not use the oily varieties during the fall months when final preparations for the pelts were made. The use of meat as an opportunity to clean house and of course each breeder kept only the best of his herd. For that reason I believe the Norwegian are producing better pelts than they have ever done before.

The introduction of a special type of blue fox has been an advantage. Do not require as much protein as when they fed it can be practically all fish of some form. We inquired about the type of sneds used and we were told that the small compartments were much smaller than we use, mostly 4 1/2 by 3 1/2 with wire bottoms, etc., similar to ours. Two foxes are kept in these small compartments and apparently the international room 24 by 12 feet by 8 feet and a smaller one 6 by 12 by 8. The larger room contains about 65,000 lbs. of fox feeds and was at a temperature of 15 degrees Fahrenheit. The smaller room had as refrigerator just a blower coil which keeps it at 28 degrees. Once a week it is filled up from the large room thus dividing the room into two sections. Both gentlemen were much impressed with the cleanliness of the ranch, the large number of sheds, 24 of 100 feet long and the feed house, equipment and other buildings and particularly remarked on the large size of the adult foxes and fox pups.

On our return to our office we called Messrs. Owen and Larsen with questions in an endeavor to learn as much as possible about the international outlook for silver fox and allied furs. Mr. Larsen said he found Ed. Fromm, President of Fromm's great ranches, willing to collaborate with other fox ranchers in Canada, Norway and elsewhere. Mr. Fromm has the same problems as the rest of us, said Mr. Larsen, namely, that the cost of production is now almost 50 percent higher than the price realizable on the present markets. Mr. Fromm said we must endeavor to cut the cost of the feed used in producing a pelt from the present \$18 or \$19 down to \$10 and other expenses must be lowered in proportion.

Mr. Larsen asked how can this be done and Mr. Fromm explained that they are conducting experiments with soy beans and other protein vegetable materials which he believed would eventually constitute a food having all the requirements that horse meat and present foods have. Month and if the present rate of slaughter continues, said Mr. Larsen, its price will be much higher than it is today. We asked him about whole meat and couldn't it be obtained easily and cheaply in Norway? He said no; whole meat is scarce and its cost is not so very much different

- NEWSY NOTES -

By Agricola

THE CANVAS-BACK DUCK

It is not easy to determine the status of this duck on P. E. Island. Its range at the present day is towards the west of the continent, though there are records that in the first half of the 19th century canvasbacks were to be met with in thousands on the Atlantic coast. Their numbers were thinned almost to extinction by unrestricted shooting, drainage of ponds, drought and disease. Of late there has been some comeback to these excellent game birds and perhaps they may be classed as chance visitors to our territory. The late Mr. Ludlow Jenkins recorded that two canvasbacks were shot in Alexander Bay in 1910, and that is the latest information of their presence.

As previously remarked the various compilers of the Chronicle were keen on the genealogies of their Kings. The scribe would suddenly interrupt the royal pedigree into the midst of his narrative in a manner: A.D. 755—Bernard then succeeded to the Kingdom, which he held but a little while and unprosperously; for King Offa the same year put him to flight and assumed the government; which he held nine and thirty winters. Offa was the son of Thingferth, Thingferth of Eowulf, Eowulf of Emod, and so through thirteen generations more, to Woden.

History of the Boyver Family

A visitor recently supplied me with a short history of the Boyver family. I already knew that the census of 1708 listed Stephen Boyver as residing in Lot 34, and John Boyver in Lot 48.

My informant, however, was able to go back much further. The Boyver (as the name was then spelt) had been Huguenots in France from 1598 to 1685, but had emigrated to England in the latter year on account of religious conflicts. It was at this time, said my informant, that the letter "V" first appears in the name, and he thought that the fugitive Huguenots had inserted it as a kind of "camouflage" for the name Boyver is still found in France.

The evidence is that the Boyvers settled in Cheshire, not far from Bunbury, a district well known at that time for its weaving, etc. But here again the question of their religion arose. The Huguenots held Calvinists in their belief, and objected (as did the "Pilgrim Fathers") to being taxed to support the State Church—as they called it. To secure freedom of worship the Boyvers crossed the Atlantic towards the close of the 17th century.

Though they had been obliged for conscience's sake to leave Britain, it is certain that the Boyvers still regarded that country with something like affection. They (with hundreds of others) did not join the army of the colonial when the American Revolution began, and when that Revolution was successful, they were made to pay the penalty of their neutrality. Now, and again, this column carried tales of the confiscations and ill-usage meted out to the "Loyalists" and of their escape to the happier land to the north. The Boyvers' four brothers, according to my informant—reached P. E. I., and were ultimately recompensed for their sufferings by a grant of a large tract of superior land. My friend did not mention the locality of this land, but he did say that they neglected it and settled down on the north-west place they found.

On terminating our interview I introduced the above gentleman to Premier J. Walter Jones and they were surprised and delighted to know that he had taken a trip to Norway in 1918 and another two years later and introduced fox farming there. The Premier was in great form and gave us a good description of the several months he spent in Norway during the cold weather. When the foxes were taken from the ship they had to drive by sleigh all through the night until three o'clock in the morning to reach the ranch and then found there was nothing to feed them. A decrepit horse was purchased for the equivalent of \$80 and hunk of meat fed to the hungry reynards. There was no need of a refrigerator to keep the rest of it as the temperature was well below zero. Friends made on that trip by the Premier continue to be so until the present time and he was delighted to learn that they were in good health despite the long, wearisome Nazi occupation. A visit to Bunbury Farm followed. There President Owen, who is a great cattle breeder, became acquainted with the relatives of world champion cattle produced at that famous spot.

They also looked at the mink ranch of the Premier's son, B. B. Jones, and the foxes and Mr. Larsen was particularly interested in the mink as he is also a breeder of mutation mink in the United States. In the late afternoon the party left for Summerside to meet George A. Callbeck, Don Stewart, Peter G. Clarke and others. They had passed through Summerside on Wednesday and that afternoon the two gentlemen were out of town so they missed them.

W. C. T. U. NOTES

A MONUMENT TO WATER

In Mitcham, eighteen twenty-two, Records an old reporter, inhabitants could buy their beer, But badly wanted water; When lo! one day a spring gushed forth All crystal clear and bubbly, So Mitcham raised a monument, Forgetting droughty troubles.

"And still it stands, and you may read If you are in that quarter, Old Mitcham's praise to Heaven above, For priceless gift of water. Let's emulate those Mitcham folk, Give thanks in gay brass, For Christmas cheer and coming year, And toast in aqua pura."

PREVENT TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

We are having a campaign for careful driving and safety on the roads. The Prince Edward Island Department of Public Works and Highways has given instruction, both visual and by the written word, to promote safe driving. Governor Bernard has given an address with the same object in view, and on all sides people are being warned against driving to the common danger.

This is a subject that should merit the careful consideration of all — inasmuch as everybody is either a driver or a pedestrian, and both classes are affected.

The Woman's Christian Temperance Union are glad to add their voice to help promote public safety at the time of this recent visit to our Province, Rev. Abner Langley, Maritime Secretary of the Temperance Federation, showed that in Ontario 45 per cent of traffic accidents are caused by liquor.

(1) It slows down his reaction time—that is the time that elapses from the moment the picture of a child in the path of his car is reflected to his brain, until his foot is applied to the brake.

(2) Alcohol shortens his range of vision, he cannot see so far ahead.

(3) Alcohol also shortens his range of vision sideways, that is, the distance he can see on either side while still looking ahead. It puts blinders on him.

(4) Alcohol gives him a false sense of confidence, that causes him to take dangerous chances.

(5) In some cases, alcohol leads to colour blindness.

In last Saturday's column appeared an item entitled: "Death on the Roads", which is well worthy of repetition by way of emphasis.

"In Britain alone fifteen people are killed every day of the year, and in the United States and Canada several times that number—no violent deaths daily on streets and highways and it hardly causes so much as a ripple upon the surface of our lives except as we may be immediately affected by these accidents."

"The following resolution passed at the annual meeting of the Health League acknowledging alcohol as a contributing factor in infection.

"Whereas it is established by the highest authorities that in a considerable proportion of venereal disease infections alcoholism is a factor.

"Be it resolved that governmental authorities and interested organizations give serious consideration to the close relationship between alcohol and venereal disease and take any steps found to be practicable, especially through the medium of education, toward early improvement of the condition."

"Free marital blood tests for this are on the statutes of the four western provinces and P. E. I. Let our women press for enforcement in these provinces and for enactment of such legislation in the other provinces.

Robert Prichard, national board chairman of Alcoholics Anonymous, says there are 600,000 chronic female alcoholics in the United States. He says that this is one out of every four chronic alcoholics of the 2,508,000 chronic drunks in this country. He estimates that there are 5,000 female drunkards in Washington, our capital city.

"Even if you are on the right track, you will be run over if you sit there." —War Cry.

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and Gonorrhoea Week, sending illustration from the Provincial Board of Health.

V. D. has increased 35 per cent in this last year and is a major health problem.

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