

TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH Silver Fox and Mink Farming

A meeting of the Executive of the Canadian National Silver Fox Breeders' Association was held in the company's office last Tuesday afternoon and the date of the annual meeting was fixed for June 21st. at Montreal. A letter was read by D. O. Stewart requesting the Association to send a delegate to the International Fur Conference to be held in Oslo, Norway, July 20th. It will be remembered that the great international fur conference ever held was at Charlottetown, July, 1948, with members attending from Norway, Iceland, Newfoundland, United States, Canada and others represented by correspondence. At that meeting a great deal of information was given by each country regarding its fur farming programs and certain specific actions were taken in an effort to stabilize fur farming. While these have not accomplished a great deal as yet they have been of some practical importance and it was felt by the Directors of the Canadian National Association that contact should be kept up and the International fur conference continued.

After a full and free discussion it was unanimously decided to send D. O. Stewart to represent the Association at Oslo. There could not be a better choice as Mr. Stewart was the principal organizer of the initial meeting at Charlottetown, in touch with various parties in the different countries connected with the Association and will assemble the required data to be presented at Oslo. Of course during the present disturbed state of world finances and the transition period which countries are going through, many difficulties will arise that appear insoluble but by the free contacts made at International meetings and some give and take, progress will be made and a more healthy state of affairs result. Mr. Stewart will likely make the trip by air, leaving early in July.

Quite a discussion took place re the fact that Hon. Mr. Abbott had failed to remove either the processing tax or the excise tax in his budget, while freeing jewellers and silversmiths from the 25 per cent tax levied. It was moved, seconded and unanimously carried that a resolution pointing out the very difficult situation in which the fur farming industry is and asking that the processing tax at least be discontinued. That tax is 10 per cent and an additional tax of 8 per cent is placed on the manufacturer's cost. There is still time if Mr. Abbott will correct the necessary error in session, but if not, then nothing further can be done until a new budget is presented.

The writer had the pleasure of looking through the company's vaults which contained a magnificent collection of platinum, pearl platinum, white marked and silver pelts carefully graded and labeled and kept in ideal storage conditions. The association is fortunate in having such reliable personnel as George A. Callbeck, Manager, Lloyd Lookerby, Asst. Manager, Thomas Carruthers, Secretary, Vernon Matthews, Treasurer, Brenton Clark and others. It has been continuously operating since 1923 and during that period has handled over a million pelts without a single one lost or gone astray. No compilation of the amount of money handled is available but must run into upwards of fifty millions.

Bruce Callbeck of the firm of Callbeck-Lawless, Denver, Colorado, who specializes in the selling of fine furs, sends an article which appeared on the front page of the Denver Post a couple of weeks ago. Mr. Callbeck is a son of Walter H. Callbeck of Brantford, Ont., who was a fur trader. The first enclosure is a picture of Mrs. Maxine Rolle, state senate stenographer, modelling a silver fox fur which is to be presented to Mrs. Bessie Truman, wife of President Truman. The fur gift is from the fur farmers of Colorado. The other enclosure is as follows:

By THOR SEVERSON Denver Post Staff Writer Competition from the Soviet Union is threatening to drive into extinction the one-time profitable American fur farming industry. As proof, U. S. fur farmers representatives cite these figures: Sixty-seven per cent of Russia's exports to the United States are fur shipments and these shipments—which averaged 240 million dollars annually the last three years—are glutting the market. Before the war there were 1,500 fur farms in the U. S. Today there are less than 260, and many face bankruptcy—unless some clamp is put on Russian fur exports to the U. S.

This plight of the American fur farmer was pictured Tuesday by two Colorado fur farmers who used statistics compiled by the

many months. A contributing reason was the uncertainty about the taxes on furs in the new budget which will be presented to the British House of Commons in the near future. Practically all the buying was done by Canadians and firms that bought for export. Platinum and pearl platinum were mostly withdrawn and all-overs about 40 per cent sold. There was very little change in the average prices for the goods that were sold so the market could not be said to have been on the down grade in price. A brighter picture is expected for coming sales, that is if the British budget gives some encouragement to fur merchants.

News from Argentina is that the fur industry is facing a grave situation there as a result of the import ban in force in that country. The Argentine fur industry is one of the most important in South America and has been practically brought to a standstill by the fact that they cannot import furs. Stocks have been used up and these can only be replenished by imports from the United States, Canada and some European countries and the government will not give any member licence to allow these to be brought in. Over 7,500 workers are employed by the Argentine fur industry. Before the advent of dictator Peron and his beautiful wife Argentina was the most prosperous country in South America and Argentina furs made trips to Montreal and purchased platinum and silver fox furs in large quantities.

It was an Argentine buyer that bought four platinum pelts in January 1948 that were raised on McLaugh's and MacKinnon Silver Fox Farms ranch, for an average of \$220 each. They were sold through the Canadian National Silver Fox Breeders' Association. He also bought a great many other high-priced pelts at that same sale. Just from memory we can remember that some 138 platinum pelts from that ranch, raised that year, sold for an average of over \$100. It was certainly nice money but that was the time when the government skimmed the cream off the dish with its 100 per cent excess profits tax—20 per cent of which they returned since.

The Canadian Fur Auction Sales Company sale of general furs last week showed that approximately half the catalogue changed hands at prices that the sales room considered unchanged since February. Top price for muskrats was \$2.35 paid for Nova Scotia winter part fall, and \$2.20 for both eastern Canadian and M.K.R. Ermine was 50 per cent sold at a decline of 10 to 15 per cent. Top price was \$3.15 for eastern Canada XL which ranged upwards from \$1.65. Fisher was considered by the sales room observers to be 40 per cent sold at a decline of 15 per cent. Ones, extra dark, brought a top of \$92, and ones dark, ranged from \$84 to \$80. Raccoon, skunk, wolf and timber wolf were officially reported mostly unsold. Top price for raccoon was \$2.35 for both the Ontario and eastern Canada. For skunk the top price was 95 cents.

The auction sale of silver fox and mutations which followed the above sale was the poorest for

President Truman said Ashley, could ask congress to block Russian fur imports if he chose to use the reciprocal trade agreement's "emergency escape clause" which provides that if any imports under the agreement endanger a domestic business, those imports can be curbed.

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NEWSY NOTES

By Agricola

THE SKY IN APRIL On April 1st, the sun rises at 5.56, and sets at 6.40. That is Standard Time, corrected to the Latitude of Charlottetown.

On the 4th, at hrs. 20.39, there will be a conjunction of the Moon and Uranus; and on April 6, the Moon will be in its First Quarter.

The Moon is in Perigee on April 12, when our satellite will be 222,500 miles away. The Moon will be Full on this date also; and early on the 13th there will be a lunar eclipse.

On April 16th there is a conjunction of the Moon and Jupiter (22 hrs. 15 min.), the Moon being in Last Quarter. (Usually rain at this conjunction.)

Lyrid Meteors. April 21. Moon in Apogee on April 24, distant 252,200 miles.

April 28. New Moon. There is a partial eclipse of the Sun, but it will not be visible here, I think.

The wonderful winter constellations will soon be below our horizon with "the shining daffodil dead, and Orion low in his grave." (Tennyson.) On a clear evening just now the magnificent Orion may still be seen in the Southwest as a long-legged giant; the legs, however, being supplied by the constellation Lepus!

The Snowy Owl

Bain says, in his "Birds of P. E. Island" (1891): "The Great Snowy Owl alone hawks over the crystal fields of winter in broad daylight. It is an Arctic bird coming down from the desolate region of Labrador only during the severest weather to search for mice, shrews and other small quadrupeds on our less deeply industed fields. Its plumage is white with dusky spots."

We know a little more about this owl now. When driven south by a severe winter, Snowy Owl come in droves. An observer saw 89 Snowy Owls in 11 weeks, in the winter of 1926-7. The last record of this bird appears in "The Guardian" of March 11, 1946, where it is stated that Mr. T. J. Inman, of Bedouque, found a dead owl whose wings from tip to tip, measured 4 ft. 8 inches. Several "Snowies" have been taken or shot, as far south as North Carolina.

If these owls confined themselves to the diet outlined by Bain, they would be welcome, but unfortunately for them they prefer game, (ducks, etc.) and poultry when available. They have the habit too, of perching on some object such as a tall post, a haystack or the like, which affords a good

view of anything stirring. In Peterson's "Field Guide to the Birds" (1947), the Snowy Owl is said to be cyclic, irrupting in numbers at intervals of about 4 years.

Snowy Owl. AOU 376. Irregular Winter Visitor. Plumage white, more or less flecked and barred with dark brown, or blackish; head round, no ear tufts, whitish under the chin. Some of the males are almost white and unmarked. Feet and toes feathered to the tips of the latter. Length of adult 28 inches; wingspread about 4 feet.

A disastrous trend.

The Royal Commission on Population (British) has given out some ominous figures. The birth-rate of the upper professional and independent class is 1.5 per family, therefore not reproducing itself. The middle class birthrate is 2 per family, barely maintaining itself. The working class, miners and farmers especially, have 3 or 4 children to the family on an average. Taking in the whole population, the average number of children in the family, today, is 2: sixty years ago it was more than five. And there are now more than 50 million people in Britain.

Thus the most cultured element in the British nation is falling behind in the struggle, while a less intellectual class is taking the lead. There is this to be said, however; it is easier to get a good education in Britain now, than it was sixty years ago—and that is somewhat of a substitute for the fallure culture.

There is another threat to the Socialist government of Britain, which will be further increased by its improvement of the Public Health. People are living longer now at the same time that the birth rate is decreasing. In time (and that not a long time) there will be an increasing multitude of retired and pensioned workers, to be maintained by fewer and fewer young people. (Some astute Britishers foresee this, are directing their steps to other parts of the Commonwealth.) In addition to this burden there is an ever-growing host of officials to be maintained. The future looks none too bright.

Black Sheep Everywhere.

In looking over the family pedigrees which sometimes appear in this column, one cannot help noticing that all, or nearly all, possess members so inquisitive that their descendants can scarcely

NORTH AMERICAN LIFE L. S. STEVENSON BRANCH MANAGER 140 RICHMOND ST. A MUTUAL COMPANY

Newcastle on Tyne and became family circulated amongst the prosperous merchants in the long run, though it was said they remained Jacobites. My grandmother on the one side, and great grandmother on the other, were both Hepples, and the name was used as a Christian name by some of their descendants. About the beginning of last century there was a privately printed genealogy of the Hepple family circulated amongst the descendants, from which I made copious notes, a few of which I still have. A strange history! The remote Ivo, enemy of God and man, living to a ripe old age and leaving rank and wealth to his children, while his descendant of Hepple, moved by religion and loyalty, joined the Stuarts in rebellion and was impoverished and ruined.

Brooder House Policy The bonus on brooder stoves will be paid again this year provided the applicant builds a new brooder house that meets the requirements of the Department and that brooder equipment has not been previously used. The brooder house should be 8 x 10 or 10 x 12 and be so situated that it can be moved from time to time to clean range. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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THERE OUGHTA BE A LAW! By Gagaly and Shorted ACCORDING TO THE GAL WHO TYPES 'EM UP, THE RESTAURANT SHE WORKS FOR WANTS ENOUGH MENUS TO FILL A VAULT... GET UP ANOTHER 3 DOZEN! I LIKE MY CUSTOMERS TO HAVE PLENTY OF MENUS. OFFICE AND ACCORDING TO THE PEOPLE WHO EAT THERE, THAT'S JUST WHERE THEY KEEP 'EM! Thanks to SOL H. RADWICK, CHARLESTON, S.C. OUT OUR WAY COME, LITTLE BOY, I'LL GIVE YOU AND YOUR DOG A LIFT— BUT FIRST I THINK IT WOULD BE NICE TO PICK UP THAT GLASS ALONG THERE! BOY, AIN'T SHE AWFUL NICE WITH PEOPLE! THE WORRY WART J.R. WILLIAMS

WHY HAVE SORE FEET? JUST RUB IN MINARD'S LINIMENT

ANNUAL MEETING P. E. I. Potato Growers' Ass'n. CANADIAN LEGION HALL 57 Grafton Street—Charlottetown WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 1949 2:30 P.M. and 7:30 P.M. AFTERNOON SESSION—2:30 P.M.—The Annual Meeting of the Association for general transaction of business will be held in the Canadian Legion Hall. All debenture holders and patrons are qualified to vote at this meeting. In addition to the annual reports, other matters to be considered are: Appointment of Representatives to the Advisory Committee of Plant Diseases Indemnification Fund, application of Price Support on this year's crop by representative of Agriculture Prices Support Board and other matters pertinent to the Potato Growers of this Province, — Consideration to Expansion of Association to include marketing of other farm products. EVENING SESSION—7:30—Educational Meeting open to the Public— 1. Will include special films of interest to Potato Growers. 2. Reports by Dominion Inspection and Science Services. 3. Discussion on New Trade Restrictions on Export of Seed to United States and possible affects on marketing 1949 crops. 4. Review of price trends in relation to Potato Production over past 25 years by J. E. McIntyre of C. N. R., Moncton. By Order of Directors. P. E. I. POTATO GROWERS' ASSOCIATION

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