Leather Industry in Canada

Canada being one of the great cattle-raising countries of the world, it is only natural that the leather industry should occupy a position of much importance in the industrial life of the country, and it is interesting to note that the value of production in 1922 shows a substantial increase over the figures for the preceding twelve months. The value of production of the tanneries in 1922 was $24,291,884, compared with $22,905,528 in 1921. These totals are exclusive of the value of hides and skins tanned for customers but include the amounts received by the tanneries for custom work.

An analysis of the production value shows that, of the total, "sole" leather amounted to $9,175,420. The output of "upper" leather totalled $10,497,813; of harness leather, $1,845,131; of other leather, $1,702,164; of wool, hair and glue stock, $210,834, and of other products, $280,734.

Capital invested in the industry in 1922 amounted to $32,818,775, which was opportioned as follows: Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, $286,000; Quebec, $4,554,426; Ontario, $27,852,404; and Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia, $125,885. There were employed, during the period under review, 3,854 persons, to whom salaries and wages totalling $4,302,918 were paid.

The number of establishments in 1922 was 116, which is a decrease compared with 1921 but an increase of 16 tanneries compared with 1920. Ontario and Quebec, with 39 and 65 tanneries respectively, may be said to be the centre of this industry in Canada. The livestock yards at Toronto and Montreal annually handle hundreds of thousands of livestock and provide an abundant source of material for plants in these provinces. The remaining establishments are spread over the Dominion, Nova Scotia having 3; New Brunswick, 2; Manitoba, 2; Alberta, 3; and British Columbia, 2.

The leather export situation during 1922 was very satisfactory. The value of leather, unmanufactured, exported from Canada during the calendar year 1922, was $5,091,384, an increase over the previous year of over a million dollars. The import situation also shows an improvement, the 1922 figures showing a decrease compared with the previous year. Imports in 1922 totalled $3,764,929. compared with $4,059,222 in 1921 and $8,467,528 in 1920. Fine leathers formed the major share of the imports, accounting for nearly one-third of the total value.

—AND THE WORST IS YET TO COME

He—"You wouldn't love me any more if I had a million dollars, would you?"

She—"N-n-n-o—I wouldn't love you any more."

March Mornings.

March mornings! Each a brimming cup
That dancing Phoebes filleth up—
A drink to start the blood to race
And prick the feet to trip apace,

March mornings! When the darting sun
Leaps forth, a clear new course to run
Like nettled steed that feels the spur
And bounds with every pulse astir.

March mornings! When the boisterous wind
Retorts the whistling lad in kind,
And kicks the fuzzy cloudlets high
Like footballs on a field of sky.

March mornings! Let them come apace
To show old winter's run his race,
And that the world is all awing
And waiting for the call of spring!

—Maurice Morris.

Who bravely dares must sometimes risk a fall.

The Useful Tin Roof.

"I'm figgering on putting a tin roof on one bedroom of my house," announced Gap Johnson of Rumpus Ridge at the auction.

"Roof leak?" asked an acquaintance.

"Nope, not specially. But with a tin roof I can hear it rain in the morning, and won't have to get up till I feel like it."

Bad English.

"You are an educated man," said the Judge, "but this is a disgraceful crime you have been found guilty of. Have you anything to say before sentence?"

"Only this, your Honor," replied the pedant. "Whatever the sentence may be, for heaven's sake don't end it with a preposition."

Modern Ways.

Mr. Spendix—"Any installments due to-day?"

Mrs. Spendix—"No, dear, I think not."

Mr. Spendix—"Any payments due on the house, the radio, the furniture, the rugs, or the books?"

Mrs. Spendix—"No."

Mr. Spendix—"Then I have ten dollars we don't need. What do you say we buy a new car?"

A Berlin newspaper man was recently fined for quoting eggs at 150 billion marks apiece after the government had fixed the price at 130 billion marks. He explained that he had had to pay the price he had named, but the judge told him he was "attempting to raise the price artificially."

Dehydration of Canadian Fruit

In the past year a great step forward has been taken in demonstrating to fruit growers how dehydration can save for use much of the fruit that, at certain seasons, gluts the market or is wasted, says the Natural Resources Intelligence Service of the Department of the Interior.

Realizing the need for some immediate action to be taken to assist the marketing of the increasing amount of fresh fruit, the Department of Agriculture appointed a committee from its various branches which had to do with the fruit industry. It was instructed to gather information and report. The committee was composed of E. S. Archibald, director of Experimental Farms (chairman); Geo. E. MacIntosh, fruit commissioner; C. S. McGillivray, chief canning inspector, Health of Animals Branch (Secretary) Dr. F. T. Shutt, director chemical laboratory division, and W. T. Macoun, Dominion horticulturist.

As a result of its interim report, the estimates of the Department of Agriculture for 1923 contained an item of $10,500 "for experiments in dehydration of fruits and vegetables." During the year three experimental plants were erected, namely, a small model laboratory plant at the experimental farm, Ottawa, operated under the direct supervision of Dr. Shutt and Mr. Macoun, a semi-commercial plant at Penticton, B.C., and a medium sized commercial plant at Grimsby, Ontario. The two latter were erected and operated under the supervision of C. S. McGillivray.

It is known that dehydration processes vary in efficacy according to the climate in which they are used, and the system adopted by the Canadian government is the result of a personal visit to California and Oregon, during which every assistance towards a complete survey of the conditions was willingly given, and especially by Professor A. W. Christie, of the Agricultural Experiment Station of the University of California.

Hundreds of evaporating processes have been tried in the United States and elsewhere, but the most satisfactory are re-circulating processes, with the application of warm moisture to the air current, and the electric vacuum. The excellent results claimed for the latter system, and extending to fish and meat, are at present, however, beyond the reach of commercial economy. In all cases a regulating method of heat content is essential, and still more so the practical experience of operators who by touch and sight can tell to a niceity the line that separates correct dehydration from cooking. Two men owned 490 acres of fruit orchard in California; the one saved $100,000 by knowledge and personal attention, the other lost $80,000 by lack of care.

The Penticton plant was bought in California, and, with certain modifications to suit the climate, was set up and successfully operated last year. At the end of the season a fire destroyed most of the Government dehydrated fruit, but the plant was saved. The little fruit that was saved will provide samples for the British Empire Exhibition. There is little doubt that these will weather the critical attention of the hundreds of wholesale buyers who will be sure to examine such products with unbiased commercial acumen.

British Columbia growers have eagerly co-operated in the work. They know full well that distant markets are to be their salvation, and realize that, though their acreage had increased tenfold in the last few years, the present market is but little larger. The Ontario growers, having a large population within easy range, are naturally less anxious, but are by no means blind to the importance of dehydration.

Co-operative packing and marketing, as proved by the California Fruit Growers Association, is essential to continual success. In British Columbia 96 per cent. of the fruit growers hold together and in Ontario progress on these lies is in evidence. It may be noted that there is no antagonism between canners and dehydrators, as the market for the one product does not interfere with the other.

So far the Department of Agriculture has not had time to develop its special domestic dehydrator, nor to handle other fruit than apples, pears, peaches and plums, but the loganberry, raspberry, cranberry, etc., will have their turn. If the housewife realizes the value of having spinach, and other fresh vegetables from her home garden for winter use, an excellent type of domestic dehydrator is now on the market, while the Department of Agriculture is likely to produce a model at a price less than the patented article.

In preparation for the growing industry of dehydrated fruit, and indeed for the marketing at good prices of any fruit to be eaten fresh or canned, orchardists are strongly advised to plant the best varieties only, and even to face a temporary loss in making fire wood of the many inferior trees. It is well known that when first-class greengages enter the market they find few buyers, because the housewives have already filled their shelves with a poor sort of yellowish plum, which is dumped on the market earlier and at such a low price that it brings no profit to the grower.

Passing Ages Leave Untouched Farmer of Bible Lands

By William T. Ellis

Always the first victim—and always the ultimate victor—that is the farmer of Bible lands.

For more than 4,000 years conquerors and empires have been sweeping to and fro over these oldest of inhabited parts of the earth; and before every invasion the farmer has been the earliest to suffer the destruction wrought by imperialism. Yet to-day it is only the farmer who pursues his way in the unchanged fashion of ages ago; the very names and times of some of the once victorious empires are a matter of dispute among bookworms.

Anew I have lately been traveling over this oldest part of the Old World, and mostly off the beaten tracks. For illustration, I am just back from a journey throughout the length and breadth of Phoenicia, which lies along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, from Gaza, whose city gates Samson stole, to Antioch, that once splendid city, where the disciples of Jesus were first called Christians. Also I have within recent months seen both the well-known and the little-known regions of Greece. I have traversed the Balkans and Turkey and sojourned in Egypt. I have also been through Arabia and Mesopotamia into Bagdad and Babylon, and have crisscrossed the Caucasus and wandered amidst the ruins of Western Persia.

Only a fragment of these journeys is indicated by the simple statement that I have gone from the Garden of Eden down into the Tigris-Euphrates Valley and to the island of Patmos, where Saint John saw the end of all things. I mention this background, not that the reader may share the bumps and the bugs that I have endured in his behalf, but only to accredit the one big observation I desire to make concerning agriculture in Bible lands.

Farming and farm folk have survived and overcome the ages. They are still plowing and sowing and reaping amid the ruins of hundreds of forgotten cities which in their day of pride deemed themselves permanent and all-powerful. It is curious how the books seem to have missed this point of the triumph of the farmer. It struck me first upon leaving the buried temples of Sakkara, in Egypt. On the wall of one of the tombs I saw a clear picture, in colors, painted thousands of years ago, of an Egyptian farmer plowing. In a little while, after leaving Sakkara, I saw a living farmer who might have posed for this very portrait, so similar were the features. Dynasties had risen and fallen and been forgotten, but the type of ordinary man had persisted throughout the ages. Not only that, but the living man, hitched to the plow of the living man, were no different from those that had trodden the same fields in past centuries, as pictured on the walls of the tomb. Still more astonishing, the plow itself was the same form of sharpened wooden beam that had been portrayed in colors at least 4,000 years before, and that is still the prevailing agricultural implement throughout Asia. Archaeologists may squabble about the exact date of Tutenhamun's reign, but there can be no question about the reign of the plow. Occasionally, in Anatolia, I noticed a modern steel plow in use; but, true to tradition, the farmer was guiding it with one hand.

Past and Present.

Contrast is perhaps the dominant note of these realms of greatest historic antiquity. Over against the ruins of Marathus, which lies in the great plain north of the present Tripoli, in Syria, I found a perfect picture of the living present amidst the dead past—or perhaps I should say of the living past amidst the dead present.

What changes Marathus has seen! All the splendors of the East once vaunted themselves in her streets; and hot-blooded men, who are now but names in books such as Sennacherib and Alexander and Saint Paul, trod these streets in the flesh. Proud Roman youths rode in the gilded chariots that made these deep ruts in the rock; and even in their day the stone dwellings were a curiosity to be visited and discussed. What sort of edged tools did these prehistoric people use for their elaborate and extensive rock cutting? How did they dress and live? The only living thing that my companion and I found in Marathus, except the lizards and the grasshoppers, was a huge snake.

Now for the contrast. Around these beguiling ruins, and as heedless of them as of the woves that lap the shore of the neighboring Mediterranean, the Bedouin families are encamped in reed huts, harvesting the grain. They are of the same type as the farmers who used to go forth from Marathus, for now, as then, in the East the farmers do not live on the land but in villages and towns. In harvest time these Arab helpers come from the East, as they have been coming for ages, bringing their simple tools with them. What one sees today may be recorded as personal glimpses of pre-Christian farming.

The home life of these farmers, which is spent either in the black goat's hair tents of the roving Bedouin or in mud villages, has been changelessly primitive. The reed shack, which is at once bedroom, dining room, nursery and living room—there is no use for a bathroom!—of a large family, often with more than one wife, could easily be placed in the kitchen of the average Canadian farmhouse.

In the wheat field, which has been plowed with a crooked stick and is not fertilized or cultivated at all, the grain is sparse and low, and often only in little patches. Bible lands are for the most part stony ground. The reaping is done by hand sickles, made by a neighbor of smithy skill. Four bits of bamboo are worn over the knuckles of the left hand of the reaper to facilitate grasping the stalks of grain. Men, women and children wield the sickle; I have more than once seen a Ruth following the reapers to glean the stalks their hands have missed. The grain is bound into small sheaves and these are stacked on their sides. Because there is no rainfall in the Holy Land during the summer, there need be no haste.

An Age-Old Threshing Scene.

Threshing is as wasteful as it is primitive. On a bit of relatively hard earth the grain and straw are thrown down, and animals are hitched to a sled that has a hundred or more bits of flint embedded in its under side. Then, for weary hours on end, the sled is driven round and round over the grain, the feet of the animals—they may be donkeys, horses, cows or oxen; I never have seen camels so employed, probably because of the cushion tires which they wear for feet—aiding in the separation of grain from husk. It is usually the children's work to ride the threshing sled, and one may see whole families crowded on a single sled.

Of course by this simple process of threshing apparently older than the practice of beating with a flail, which is in vogue farther south—much grain sinks into the ground and is otherwise lost. When the work is done the straw is stacked or carried away on the backs of camels or donkeys—the original hay wagon. Processions of these straw-laden camels, usually led by a man on a donkey, are one of the commonest sights of this season in the Holy Land. Chopped straw is the ordinary fodder for stock in the Near East; it is the nearest approach to success of the famous experiment of feeding a horse on sawdust.

When the straw has been removed from the threshing floor the wheat is ready for the winnowing. This is done by the old-fashioned method of tossing wheat and chaff into the air with a three-pronged wooden pitchfork, so that the chaff blows away and the wheat falls to the ground.

In the midst of these busy harvest scenes, I saw "two women grinding at a mill," sitting in the doorway of one of the reed shacks. Few scenes in Bible lands better illustrate the primitive scale of life than this. It tells first of all, that the women are the workers. This is no country for the feminist. There is no kind of work, except fighting, that the women do not carry on; the favorite vocation of the men seems to be sitting in the shade, talking or playing games.

Feminine labor is bound to be cheap in a land where extra workers are secured by the simple process of marrying them. So the time and strength of two women may be spared for the dreary drudgery of grinding up a few handfuls of grain in a heavy stone mill which they laboriously turn. The meagre measure of the Eastern peasant's life is illustrated also by the pitiful smallness of the store of wheat that serves the family for food, supplemented by cheese and an occasional dish of mutton. The variety of an ordinary Canadian's fare would seem untold luxury to these people.

Though the monuments of old Marathus have had their boastful inscriptions obliterated by the gnawing tooth of time, the simple contentment of the unsung farmer folk, who have persisted throughout the passing of all empires and civilizations, is revealed by the smiling faces of both adults and children. A child-like happiness seems to mark these primitive peoples. They do not know that their lot is hard, for they have experienced no other. Their wants are few and easily satisfied. Wealth is ordinarily rated in terms of flocks and herds and donkeys and camels. Now and then the insidious West has invaded the Arab farmer's home. I saw a family moving consisting of two camel's loads of goods, including tents and tools; and on the top of one camel's burden proudly rode an American sewing machine of the hand-operated type, which is the only kind used in the East, where people sit on the floor. As usual, the man of the family rode and the women walked behind.

France has brought good roads and safe to Syria and has forbidden the general carrying of arms, so these Arab farmers work without wearing guns and pistols and knives and clubs, as they used to do. But the new highway that runs along the coast has brought its own troubles, in the form of demon-possessed automobiles which fly past, scaring children and animals. The lordly camel loses somewhat of his air of scorn when a car approaches—the Arabs say the camel is so haughty because he alone knows the hundreth name of Allah; every pious Moslem can recite the ninety-nine beautiful names of God, but the hundredth is the camel's secret—and the stolid little donkey, who has carried the civilization of half a dozen millenniums on his back, grows panicky as the automobile draws near.

The Sheep and Their Gentle Shepherd.

The tails of the sheep are huge lumps of woolly fat, as broad as the sheep themselves and as long as they are wide. In the centre of this big tail grows out a smaller tail of regulation size and sometimes of a different color. Black sheep are a common reality hereabouts, though the prevailing color is white, even as that of the capering goats is black.

Sheep in the East are shepherded, not herded. A Christian's thoughts grow tender as he watches the flocks and their gentle-eyed shepherds; for here before his eyes is the complete picture which was so familiar to Jesus that it found words in his Good Shepherd parables. Again and again I have watched the procedure as we drove rapidly toward a flock of sheep that filled the highway, the shepherd, in head roll and long camel's hair cloak and carrying a staff, walking in front of them. At the blowing of our raucous horn does he leap frantically about, beating his creatures this way and that in heedless terror as do the donkey drivers? No, for he is a good shepherd, and the sheep know his voice and they follow him. So he walks quietly off the road to one side, sometimes not even looking back, and his sheep crowd closely after him. The strange sounds behind them merely drive the sheep to keep closer to their shepherd. Lo, in a minute the road is clear, the sheep are safe, and the shepherd greets the noisy car with a kindly smile of curious interest.

As in Abraham's Day.

So it was in the time of Christ. So it was in the time of David. So it was in the time of Abraham. So it was the unmeasured ages that stretch back beyond the beginning of written history. The farmer and his fields and flocks continue unchanged, preserving the ageless traditions and overcoming the world of pomp and power. If these simple farm folk on the plains of Marathus, looking out on the Mediterranean toward the lovely and storied little island of Arvad, with its springs of fresh water rising up in the salt sea, were cursed with the sophisticated mind of the cynic, they might sneer at the multiform ruins of Phoenicia and Greece and Rome and Assyria and Persia and Egypt that surround them, and cry, "Behold the dead! Yet we live, unchanged and undefeatable, a symbol of the eternal triumph of the plain people who toil with Nature and depend upon Nature alone for sustenance. The ages are powerless against us; our children play about the empty tombs of the kings who once ruled the world and proclaimed themselves immortal."

A remarkable view is shown of Devil's Head Canyon, near Bankhead, Alberta. Can you pick out the rock formation from which the cut gets its name?

"A Thing of Beauty."

Below are the opening lines of "Endymion," a poem written by John Keats when he was twenty-two. It was severely criticized in the "Quarterly Review," and when the poet died at the age of twenty-five Bryon wrote:

Who killed John Keats?
"I," says the 'Quarterly,'
So savage and tartarly,
" 'Twas one of my feats."

As a matter of fact, he died in Rome of consumption, telling his friend Severn to place on his tombstone: "Here lies one whose name was writ in water." It has proved to be carved so deep and large on the rock of literature that it can never be erased.

A thing of beauty is a joy forever;
Its loveliness increases: it will never
Pass into nothingness; but will keep
A bower quet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.
Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways
Made for our searching; yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,
Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon
For simple sheep; and such are daffodils
With the green world they live in; and clear rills
That for themselves a cooling covert make
'Gainst the hot season; the mid-forest brake,
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms;
And such too is the grandeur of the dooms
We have imagined for the mighty dead;
All lovely tales that we have heard or read;
An endless fountain of immortal drink,
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

In losing fortune, many a lucky elf has found himself.

The blast that blows loudest is soon overblown.