

### TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH Silver Fox and Mink Farming

Eastwood & Holt held a very successful sale of ranch mutation mink at the Governor Clinton Hotel, New York, last week. Some 10,000 skins were offered. Standard mink reached \$33 for males and \$19.25 for females. Raw pelts washed \$53 and Stewart Platiums hit \$55 on two occasions. Best bidding was when the best goods in the offering were up for sale. It was estimated that 85 per cent of the mink were sold. One thousand silver fox, which was a rather unattractive offering, drew good competition and sold at 60 per cent sold. In the standard ranch mink offering best interest appeared to be for better goods, males and females, with lesser demand for the inferior quality pelts.

The New York Company's sale at Minneapolis last week saw 18,400 standard mink actively bid for with 81 per cent sold. Prices were reported as 10 per cent advanced over the Company's sale there on April 25th. Top males brought \$18 to \$22, females, \$12.25. Good commercial males ranged from \$18 to \$22, females, \$10 to \$11.25; 55 per cent of the nearly 5,000 Platinum mink was sold at unchanged prices and a poor collection of over 3,000 "Fasels" was 92 per cent sold with top males bringing \$37.50, which was an advance of 15 per cent above April. A collection of 112,000 muskrats was 70 per cent sold at a top of \$2.35 for spring Wisconsin extra large and large; Minnesota extra large and large sold freely at \$1.50 to \$1.68 and selected lots at \$2.00.

Two furmen who have been specializing for a number of years mostly in the manufacture of Persian lamb garments, decided last season to take a fling at mink ranching and they have succeeded near to have had surprising success. These men are Manny Ring and Eric Ritcher, who have been partners in Ring and Ritcher, New York fur house for twenty years. Mr. Ring reports that they purchased 50 pregnant female Pestsels from Northwood Fur Farm, Cary, Ill., brought them to their newly acquired 15-acre ranch in Danbury, Conn., and set up business. Net result was the birth of 276 mink kits, which, states Mr. Ring, we believe is a record production for this season. Asked what had prompted them to go into mink ranching Mr. Ring said that he sees a good future for mink and that the firm has been making some mink garments the past several seasons. "We can use our mink or sell them and are aiming at a head of 500 or 600 females," said Mr. Ring. Early in July the writer visited the ranch of George A. Calbeck, Summerside, and saw over 1,000 mink kits. I believe Mr. Calbeck said that the average production for his females was very close to six, so that would be about on a par or a little better than Mr. Ring's. George in purchasing his female mink, and males also, stipulated that they must be out of litters of six and the results show that prolificness is hereditary.

Some time ago we mentioned in this column that gratifying results had been obtained in the growth and fur quality of minks fed Terramycin — B12 as supplements to feed. Now we note that the Company that makes the above preparation, Pfizer of New York, are advertising it for sale, also.

What is true of mink is also true of foxes. Foxes should be watered twice a day during July and August. That is to say, the water utensils should be renewed from time to time. It is important too, that sheds be cleaned out frequently and that food utensils should be kept clean by being rinsed out in boiling water. The next month or six weeks will tell the mortality tale. A good rancher will have the fewest losses, carelessness can be expensive.

Ranch sanitation should be stressed now as well as at all times. A clean ranch which has been sprinkled with a solution of cresol or other disinfectant of a strength of 1 in 100 will prevent fleas from breeding and will keep down types of infectious diseases which might otherwise get a foothold. It is important that the fox dens should be cleaned out of all litter and straw now which should be burned. Then they should be washed in 1 in 100 cresol and the covers left open so that the air can hit them and dry them gradually.

Over a million and a quarter mink pelts were imported into the United States from foreign countries during the year 1951, according to statistics compiled by the U.S. Department of Commerce. The exact estimate was 1,264,000 pelts which had a foreign value of \$16,631,000. Nearly half of these imports (576,000) came from Canada and about 250,000 came from Scandinavian countries. These figures were compiled by Joseph H. Francis, Secretary, National Board of Fur Farm Organizations.

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AGENTS THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCE

### Strange But True

By F. H. MacArthur

The various weaves seen in modern textiles were all known to the North American Indians who designed them for their finest baskets. The white man copied these in his mat-making on a loom and then to cloth when finer fibres were discovered.

The dog was the first animal to be domesticated, and wheat and barley the first cereals on which civilization was founded in Sumaria and Egypt.

It is interesting to note agriculture began independently in several areas lying near Asia and Central America. Different cereals came from each of the several regions. Hard wheat came from Abyssinia, although its cultivation was largely carried on in Egypt. Soft wheat came from the district straddling Asia Minor and the North-west frontier of India. Barley has its home in Southeast Asia and Abyssinia. To the new world we owe the gift of maize and Indian corn. Indeed we might truthfully say civilization began with agriculture.

Hit-run drivers are not new, but did you ever hear of a hit and walk pedestrian? Edward Bellotti of Toronto, is keeping his eyes peeled for a fellow who smashed in the side of his car and then left the scene of the accident.

Death separated 92-year-old twin sisters when Mrs. Theodore Grouff died in Indiana. Her sister, Mrs. Alexander Toms, is in fair health.

The Indians of New Mexico, according to Stevenson, have a strange tradition that the seeds of certain plants were the principal foodstuffs in the infancy of the race before the gods sent them the corn plant.

Furthermore they believed that the original seeds came from the underworld and emerged into the light of day.

The Chile Tarweed has a special interest to moderns in that it yields under compression a high-grade oil, suitable for table use, soap-making and for lubricating machinery. It does not solidify short of 10 degrees Fahr.

A little more than half a century ago, the plant was introduced into cultivation in Europe where it thrived, and an oil-cake used to be made from its seeds for cattle feed.

The richest country in the world that simply staggers one, even to think of it. How much? Just three-quarters of a trillion dollars.

The United States always has been in the red. At the end of 1900 she had been out to \$37,500,000 the lowest point in that country's history.

In 1863, during the Civil War, it rose to a new high, and went up to a staggering figure during the First World War. Up it went again in World War II and has been rising ever since until today, it stands at \$275,000,000,000. Can a debt that big ever be paid? Time will tell. But many say it's too big to pay.

Frozen milk in the shape of bricks will be seen in the kitchens of tomorrow if its new shape proves popular. It will not lose any of its flavor and the compact brick will not occupy too much space in the refrigerator — in fact just a third of the space taken by the milk bottle.

Staple food in Western Pakistan consists of wheat and barley in summer, and maize and wheat in winter.

China's great philosopher, Confucius, wouldn't eat food that was not "chopped up properly." He also insisted that there should be the same proportion of flesh food as there was vegetables in the mixture.

"The stars at night look big and bright deep in the heart of Texas" did not hold true recently when towering clouds of red top-soil blew out of the Lone Star State giving the country the worst dusting since the dust bowl days of the 1930's.

"There's nothing to it," says Reggie Gallant of Cornwall. He is speaking about fishing, and judging by his astonishing success, which is the envy of fishermen in these parts, he should know. He can sit on the bank of any stream and pull in fish after fish without worrying about special baits.

### -NEWSY NOTES-

By J. A. Clark, D.Sc.

**Soils and Food**

A great deal has been said and written about the depletion of soils, the need of conservation, and the fact that the population of the world is rapidly increasing, so that there are many countries today that do not produce enough food for their people. There are frequent famines in countries with large populations including both China and India.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has already accomplished much, by contributing the best personnel obtainable, for its Agricultural Missions to the countries that have requested assistance towards increasing the productivity of their soils and the development of their agricultural resources. There is an increased demand for more workers in this great field of retaining and improving soil fertility and increasing the world's food supply.

In addition to countries where famines occur, there are many peoples who do not have food in sufficient quantity for their needs or have to use foods that lack essential nutritional qualities resulting in malnutrition, and it's accompanying serious scourges as the disease known as "Beriberi," so common among people who use polished rice as their chief food.

**Soil Deficiency and Human Ills**

Scientific investigations have not traced any human ill to a specific soil deficiency. We know that food is made from plants and that food is made from the soil. It has long been known that cattle grazing on soils deficient in certain minerals develop nutritional troubles. There is, however, no comparison between man's food and that of a grazing animal. Vegetables, fruits and cereals form the largest part of human food that is home-produced, by a minority of our people today. Even these play a minor role in the diet of the average home. Cattle on pasture are confined to a limited number of food plants, water and salt. Some do not have even the benefit of common salt which frequently contains other minerals as impurities.

There is no question that fertile soils produce greater quantities of crops, including legumes that are rich in protein, calcium and carotene. These will increase the supply of milk, meat, eggs, &c. Fertile soils will also produce superior fruits and vegetables that are so important in human diet. Many erroneous statements have been made that milk from cows that are pastured on poor soils will not build strong bones in children because the milk will be low in calcium and phosphorus; and that poor soils lower the value of the protein in meat obtained from cattle that graze on poor soils. Scientific experiments have shown that such statements are not true in regard to human diets, as these particular minerals are not known to be deficient in the human diet.

**Remedial Measures**

Many governments are now reforesting denuded areas, believing that forest cover will retain and probably increase the precipitation so essential for soil fertility. This certainly will greatly delay the run-off from melting snow and assist in preventing soil erosion and floods.

There is no better means of preventing much of present day soil erosion than by securing permanent stands of grasses and other plants natural to the soil.

**Denuded And Waste Areas**

We have not checked the depletion of the former fertile soils of Babylonia, but one could well expect that the beginning occurred with the removal of the natural soil protective agencies that developed with the formation of the soil through the ages. These include the lower forms of life followed by plants and trees.

This is well illustrated by the disastrous changes brought about by man when he has interfered with natural conditions on oceanic islands that are far removed from the continents. The Portuguese introduced goats about 1513 to the island of St. Helena, that at the beginning of a magnificent forest. In fifty years the goats had so multiplied that they were seen wandering over the island in flocks a mile long; they ate and destroyed the seedlings and young trees. Colonists followed who cut and burned the forests so that at the time was covered by a magnificent forest. In fifty years the goats had so multiplied that they were seen wandering over the island in flocks a mile long; they ate and destroyed the seedlings and young trees. Colonists followed who cut and burned the forests so that at the time was covered by a magnificent forest. 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