

NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE DOMINION OF CANADA.

well-known naturalist, after a trip through that country, said regarding their numbers: "Cutting in half the estimates of explorers who went before me and making a most conservative estimate, there are not less than thirty millions of these caribou." Mr. J. W. Tyrrell in his book, "Across the Sub-Arctics of Canada," says that the caribou of the Canadian "Barren Lands" is the same as the reindeer of the Laplander. These reindeer range in weight from one hundred to four hundred pounds. Mr. Tyrrell says:

As a source of venison the reindeer cannot be excelled, especially in the autumn season, when it is in prime condition. During September and October the males are rolling fat, and as food their flesh is equal to the finest beef. Of all meats I have ever tasted certainly reindeer tongues take the first place for daintiness and delicacy of flavour. From the skins of the reindeer the natives of the Arctic regions make almost every article of winter clothing. For this purpose it is most admirably suited, both because of its great warmth and its remarkable lightness. Through different methods of tanning and dressing it is made adaptable to a great variety of other uses. Sewing thread, lashing twine and other strong lines are also made from sinew obtained from along the spine of this animal.

As to their numbers, Mr. Tyrrell says:

There were many great bands literally covering the country over wide areas. The valleys and hillsides for miles appeared to be moving masses of reindeer. To estimate their numbers would be impossible. They could only be reckoned in acres or square miles.

Could these animals be tamed or domesticated? It would seem so from the experience of Mr. Tyrrell in going among them with a camera. After describing how his party slaughtered a number of reindeer and obtained a large supply of meat, he said.

Several days were spent in drying the eighteen or twenty carcasses which were preserved, and while this work was progressing my brother and I had ample time to roam over the hills and view and photograph the bands of deer which were still everywhere about me. After the slaughter of the first day we carried no rifles with us, but armed only with a camera walked to and fro through the herd, causing little more alarm than one would by walking through a herd of cattle in a field. The experience was delightful—one never to be forgotten.

If domesticated, they would furnish a livelihood for thousands of people. Great meat-packing factories could be established, and even fresh meat might be shipped out during the short season of Hudson bay navigation. A large number of people might be employed in tanning and dressing the skins, which would find a ready market both in southern Canada and in Europe. Musk-oxen are not so numerous in the "Barren Lands" as reindeer, but there are considerable numbers of them in some sections, especially in those parts not frequented by the Eskimos.

Throughout both the Mackenzie basin and the Barren Lands the numerous lakes and rivers are full of fish which could be used by fur farmers to feed many fur-bearing animals.

There is reason to believe that the raising of fur-bearing animals may in future become an important Canadian industry. As the population increases the home demand for furs will be very large. The old