

Furs.—Canada is one of the world's greatest fur producers. As early as 1676 Canadian furs sold in England were valued at £19,500. Since that time great areas of northern territory have been explored by hunter and trapper. The larger companies engaged in the business, notably the Hudson's Bay Co. and Révillon Freres, maintain extensive systems of trading posts where trappers call at intervals to dispose of their pelts and procure supplies. The large uninhabited areas of northern Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba and the Northwest Territories furnish subsistence for many of the most highly prized fur-bearing animals, among the most important of which are the beaver, fisher, various varieties of foxes, marten and others. The animals are usually caught in traps during the winter months, when the country is more accessible than during the summer and the pelts are in the best condition. The successful breeding of the fox on fur farms came with the period of rising prices after 1890, and has since developed into an important industry. Prince Edward Island has always been the centre of the industry, but farms are now found in all provinces of the Dominion. On Dec. 31, 1926, 2,523 fox farms were in operation with a total of 54,303 foxes, principally of the "silver" variety.

Although the fox has proved the most suited to domestication, other kinds of fur-bearing wild animals are being raised in captivity—mink, raccoon, skunk, lynx, coyote, rabbit, marten and fisher. Karakul sheep, from which are obtained the furs known as "Persian lamb", "astrachan" and "broadtail", are also being raised successfully in Canada. In 1926 the number of farms engaged in the raising of fur-bearing animals other than foxes was 186. Mink farms are the most numerous of the miscellaneous class, raccoon farms coming next. A few of the fox farms also raise miscellaneous fur-bearing animals in addition to the foxes.

During the year 1926-27 the value of pelts taken in Canada amounted to \$18,864,126. Pelts sold from fur farms in the calendar year 1926 were valued at \$1,224,941 and animals sold at \$2,294,629.

Forests.—Among the most valuable of all Canada's natural resources exploited up to the present time have been those of her forests. From the days when masts and spars were exported for use in the French navy and early French settlers established shipbuilding yards along the St. Lawrence up to the present, when our forests supply billions of board feet of lumber and timber and millions of tons of pulp, paper and other forest products yearly, these resources have been of immense value not only to Canada but to the Empire.

Canada's forest area may be roughly divided into three main parts:—(1) the great coniferous forest of the Pacific Slope, (2) the northern forest, partly of hardwoods, which stretches from the east slopes of the Rockies, north of the prairies and of the Great Lakes to Labrador, and (3) the mixed softwoods and hardwood forests extending from lake Superior through southern Ontario and Quebec to the Maritime Provinces. Canada's forest area has been estimated at 1,151,454 square miles, some of which is agricultural land. About 311,234 square miles are covered with accessible timber of commercial size. With regard to quantity of timber it has been estimated at 425,000,000,000 feet board measure for saw timber and 1,122,000,000 cords of pulpwood, etc., the stands in Eastern Canada making up over 40 p.c. of the total, which amounted to over 224,000,000,000 cubic feet. These figures place Canada as the second most important country in the world with regard to total forest area, Asiatic Russia being first and the United States third in this respect. During recent years the annual cuts have generally exceeded the new growth and enormous losses have been caused by fire and other destructive agencies.