

for furs to be brought to the bay. By 1816 the rivals had absorbed or ruined eleven other partnerships and were themselves on the verge of ruin. Finally, in 1821, the two were joined under the name of the older company. The Northwest Company brought with it the control of the Pacific and Arctic watersheds, to be added to the lands draining into Hudson bay, and over the whole region the Hudson's Bay Company secured legal recognition of its monopoly of the fur trade. There followed 40 years of great prosperity. The company's rights of exclusive trading in Indian territory expired in 1859, and ten years later it surrendered its other privileges. In return, Canada granted £300,000 to the company, as well as lands about its trading posts, and one-twentieth of the land in the fertile belt between the North Saskatchewan river and the International Boundary. The Hudson's Bay Company thereupon became a trading company, with no extraordinary privileges.

The Modern Industry.—Great changes have come over the fur trade in recent years. The railway has revolutionized conditions wherever its influence reaches. Vessels now ply the larger lakes and rivers. Competition has increased and new territory is eagerly sought as in the days prior to 1821. Increase in trapping and improved methods of capture, together with the advance of lumbering, mining and agricultural settlement, have driven fur-bearing animals farther and farther afield, and to conserve the fur resources of the country the provinces have found it necessary to enact laws to regulate the capture of fur-bearing animals and to provide for closed seasons during certain periods of each year. The fur trade has assisted in meeting the demand for furs by popularizing common and previously despised furs and by encouraging the use of the furs of domestic animals. Fur farming is playing an increasingly important part in the fur trade of Canada, the value of pelts of ranch-bred animals now representing about 19 p.c. of the total annual value of the raw fur production of the Dominion. The fox has proved the best suited for domestication, although other kinds of fur-bearers are being successfully raised in captivity—mink, raccoon, skunk, marten, fisher, muskrat and beaver. The successful breeding of the fox on fur farms came in the period of rising prices after 1890 and the introduction of woven wire fencing. About the middle of the last century Persian lamb, astrachan and broadtail, the product of the Karakul sheep a native of Bokhara, Central Asia, came into general use. A few of these sheep were imported into Canada some years ago, but the industry as a source of supply for pelts has not shown progress in this country. Experiments in the breeding of rabbits for their fur have resulted in the production of several valuable kinds, chief among which is the Chinchilla rabbit, whose fur resembles that of the Bolivian Chinchilla.

The important markets for Canadian furs are London and New York: the trade figures for the twelve months ended June 30, 1930, show that of the total of \$17,187,399 worth of raw furs exported, the United Kingdom received \$9,453,322 and the United States, \$6,972,456. At the close of the Great War Montreal took a position as an international fur market, holding the first Canadian fur auction sale in 1920 when 949,565 pelts, valued at \$5,057,114, were sold. The most recent figures show that at the auction sales held in Montreal during 1930 there were 2,328,977 pelts disposed of, with a total value of \$5,387,400. Sales are also held at Winnipeg and Edmonton. An important industry in Canada in connection with the fur trade is that of the dressing and dyeing of furs. In 1930 the number of fur skins treated in Canadian plants was 7,142,035 compared with 7,633,909 in 1929 and 7,974,020 in 1928. The plants in operation numbered 10 in 1930, 10 in 1929, and 12 in 1928.

Exports.—Though the bison is gone forever and the beaver and the marten are slowly following, the fur trade of Canada is in no immediate danger of extinction.