

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 and the aeroplane is frequently used in transporting furs from the more inaccessible districts. 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 close 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 26 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 are the Chinchilla rabbit, whose fur resembles that of the Bolivian Chinchilla, and the *castorrex*¹, named on account of the likeness of its fur to that of the beaver.

The important markets for Canadian furs are London and New York: the trade figures for the twelve months ended June 30, 1932, show that of the total of \$11,495,086 worth of raw furs exported, the United Kingdom received \$6,316,529 and the United States, \$3,908,773. 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 1931 there were 1,381,130 pelts disposed of, with a total value of \$4,731,648. 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 1931 the number of fur skins treated in Canadian plants was 7,034,498 and the amount received for the work, \$1,571,740. The plants in operation numbered 10.

¹ *Castor* is the French word for beaver.