

The total expenditure from the Trust Fund in the year was \$2,540,134 chiefly for agricultural assistance, relief, distributions of cash in accordance with the provisions of land surrenders, housing construction and improvements, road building and loans to Indians.

Fur Conservation.—Further progress has been made toward greater co-operation with all the provinces to include the Indian trapper in benefits arising from the management of the fur resources, in which no ownership is vested in the Federal Government on his behalf, but on which, historically and traditionally, the Indian trapper has always been dependent. Formal agreements involving a substantial contribution of federal funds have been negotiated with Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Ontario. Arrangements for trap-line management have been worked out with Alberta, British Columbia and Quebec, and the extension of this work is continuing with the object of establishing an administrative liaison with all provinces.

The Manitoba program, which has increased beaver production in that Province from 6,960 pelts in 1945 to 13,576 in 1949 with a crop of 16,000 projected for 1950, was revised and extended during the year. The area covered was extended to take in that portion of the Province lying between Lake Winnipeg and the Ontario boundary, with still further extensions planned for the immediate future. All muskrat rehabilitation projects in the Province have been brought under the scope of the Agreement. The largest of these muskrat projects, the Summerberry near The Pas, has produced, during the nine years of management, 1,346,000 muskrat pelts with a total auction value of \$3,208,000, of which about \$2,400,000 was returned to the participating trappers a large proportion of whom were treaty Indians. The planned crop for the 1950 season was 150,000 muskrats with an estimated value of \$250,000.

Equally good results have been obtained under a similar agreement, in operation since 1946, with Saskatchewan. In that period beaver production on a sustained-yield basis has risen from 1,600 pelts to 8,328 valued at \$157,399 in 1949. This result can be, in large measure, attributed to a live-beaver transplanting program under which 2,085 beaver were successfully transferred to new locations. In addition to participating in the provincial management program, which includes several muskrat rehabilitation areas, this Branch has, under lease from the Province, a special project of 250,000 acres located near the Red Earth and Shoal Lake Indian Reserves on the Saskatchewan River delta. This area has produced, under management, approximately 10,000 muskrats annually during the past few seasons; however, construction work completed during the 1947-48 seasons has brought new sections into production with the result that the 1950 crop has been set at 40,380 muskrats with an estimated value to the 85 participating Indian trappers of approximately \$75,000, all of which represents Indian income.

During 1947-49 a fur-management program was undertaken in the Province of Ontario, in co-operation with the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests, which has resulted in doubling the crop of beaver and placing the entire fur-producing area of the Province under management. During 1949 an agreement similar to those in effect in Manitoba and Saskatchewan was worked out with the provincial administration.