

tended to take every skin possible, with the knowledge that if he attempted to practise conservation someone else would probably come along and trap the area out completely.

In recent years, realizations for most types of wild furs have not kept pace with rising commodity prices. As a result, returns from the trapping enterprise have not been sufficiently attractive to keep trappers on their traplines on a full-time basis. Some have abandoned trapping completely, while in areas where other forms of employment are available many trappers have become full-time or part-time wage-earners, carrying on their trapping activities on week-ends or off days. This situation applies generally throughout the central and southern portion of the country, and one of the undesirable results of this part-time approach has been the failure to cover the trapping grounds adequately. Many of the less accessible areas tend to be neglected, with consequent wastage of the fur resource. However, in the northern regions trapping still plays an important part in the lives of the native Indians and Eskimos, providing an independent means of livelihood in these remote areas.

**Mink Farming.**—Mink farming originated in Canada in the early 1900's and has since grown to be the most important branch of fur farming. The industry apparently had its beginnings in Eastern Canada around 1910 but, being completely overshadowed at that time by the thriving silver fox business, very little in the way of records is available for the early years. Originally most ranched mink were raised on farms where the main business was the production of silver foxes and, since ranched mink pelt realizations were far from attractive at that time, it must be assumed that the raising of this species was adopted as a precaution against the recurring threat of an over-production of fox pelts. The following figures indicate the growth of the industry since 1935:—

<u>Year</u>	<u>Pelt Production</u>	<u>Average Realization</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Pelt Production</u>	<u>Average Realization</u>
	No.	\$		No.	\$
1935.....	30,558	10.58	1955.....	786,760	20.07
1940.....	229,202	9.64	1960.....	1,204,077	14.03
1945.....	255,968	21.51	1961.....	1,269,050	14.50
1950.....	589,352	17.08			

Through the years, large numbers of live mink were exported from this country to stock farms in many parts of the world. The results of this expansion in other countries were soon apparent in the increasing quantities of mink pelts marketed each year and, as early as 1939, concern was expressed by the trade concerning the ability of the market to absorb these quantities. Perhaps fortunately for the future of the industry, the rising production coincided with the appearance on the market of the first colour mutation. Initially, all ranch mink were brown or dark brown in colour, produced through crosses of various strains of wild mink. However, around 1936 the first mutation occurred—the Silverblu or Platinum, produced from conventional dark brown parents. This mutation was quickly followed by others and breeders soon learned to produce new exciting colours, so that today there exist more than 200 types, including variations of basic shades.

The appearance on the market of this wide range of natural coloured mink supplied an enormous fillip to the industry. In addition to the popularity gained through the many natural advantages of mink, the merits of owning a mink piece have been most effectively advanced through vigorous promotional campaigns. As a result, mink has achieved a popularity far surpassing that of any other fur or, indeed, of all the remainder of the world's furs combined. It is estimated that, in 1962, of a total world trade in raw furs amounting to \$350,000,000, mink accounted for \$240,000,000 and Persian lamb for \$65,000,000.

Canada Mink Breeders' Association, the national association of Canadian mink producers, was formed in 1952 through the amalgamation of several bodies. This Association is responsible for the promotion of Canadian mink in both the domestic and overseas markets and also works closely with fur auction outlets in formulating plans for marketing the annual pelt crop. In addition, the Association assists financially the undertaking by