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8-5-23

WHERE PURE SALT IS OBTAINED IN CANADA

Salt, which is such a vital necessity of our everyday life, has always been a plentiful and cheap commodity in Canada, says the Natural Resources Intelligence Service of the Department of the Interior.

In no place, however, has it ever been cheaper and more easily obtained than in the vicinity of Fort Smith, in the Northern Canada. Here the Hudson's Bay Company, the various missions and other inhabitants of that district secure their yearly supply simply by gathering it up into sacks and packing it away.

The source of this sale is a number of salt springs, which are located along what is known as the Salt river, on the boundary of the new Wood Buffalo Park. This park has but recently been created by the Dominion Government to provide protection to the only remaining herd of wild wood buffalo.

When millions of buffalo roamed freely over practically one-third of this continent extending all the way from Mexico to the Mackenzie river district this locality was a common meeting ground for the buffalo, whence they came to lick up the salt. It was no doubt while following the trail of these majestic animals that the white man first became aware of the existence of these salt springs.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie, on his voyage of exploration through the district in 1789, located and reported upon these salt springs, and Daniel William Harmon, of the Northwest Company, wrote in his journal in 1808. "About sixty miles from this (Chipewyan), down Slave river, there are several places where almost any quantity of excellent, clean, white salt may be taken with as much ease as sand along the seashore. From these places the greater part of the

Northwest is supplied with this valuable article."

These springs have always been a source of supply of salt for the white inhabitants of this district and the Lower Mackenzie valley. The native Indian is not and has never been a user of salt to any appreciable extent.

Salt "Grows" There

The water from these springs carries an almost saturated solution of pure salt, part of which is precipitated as soon as it comes in contact with the atmosphere, with the result that mounds of salt from three to five feet in depth and in some cases 100 feet in diameter are to be found at the mouths of the springs.

R. G. McConnell, of the Geological Survey, in his report of his explorations in this district in 1887, mentions several salt springs draining into Salt river, near Fort Smith, and says that the salt is remarkably pure.

The deposits vary in size up to 150 tons. From three to five tons are collected annually. The salt has also been tasted by both the Department of Mines at Ottawa and the University of Alberta at Edmonton and has been reported upon as being practically pure. The deposits were recently visited by officials of the National Resources Intelligence Service Department of the Interior, while exploring the present habitat of the wood buffalo. The area in which is found these salt springs is 290 miles north of the present terminus of the Alberta and Great Waterways railway and is reached by way of the Athabaska and Slave rivers, lying to the west of the latter river from fifteen to twenty miles in a straight line. Their economic value at present is restricted because of the distance from the outside market and railway transportation. They have, however, a very important potential value in the settlement of this district and particularly in the eventual development of the fish industry of Athabaska and Great Slave lakes, which contain some of the finest fish on the North American continent.

Northern Alberta, however, has many other salt deposits, the most notable of which, from the standpoint of possible commercial development, are those at McMurray, near the end of steel of the Alberta and Great Waterways railway. According to test borings made by the Alberta Government in 1919 and 1920, there is from twenty-five to forty feet of rock salt of commercial value at a depth of 631 feet. At least fourteen feet of this deposit occurs in the form of transparent, colorless rock salt. This boring was made to a depth of 685 feet. It is reasonable to expect, from the conditions at the bottom of the boreholes, that there may be even a great thickness of rock salt below the depth reached.

Omitting the salt used for the gulf and sea fisheries and for chemical industries Canada in 1921 used 44 pounds of salt per person. A conservative estimate therefore, of Alberta's salt consumption might place it at 25,000,000 lbs. With almost an equal consumption in each of the adjoining provinces, Saskatchewan and British Columbia, a ready home market is available for any development which may be undertaken of these deposits.

A BONUS FOR SETTLERS

Montreal, May 29—A cost of approximately \$250,000 will be borne by the colonization department of the province of Quebec in the course of the present year as a result of the decision of the Government to grant a bonus of \$4 per acre for each acre of land cleared by colonists. This was the estimate which Hon. J. E. Perreault, Minister of Colonization, Mines and Fisheries, made today in discussing matters. Ordinarily in past years the acreage cleared has been about 40,000 acres, and the minister is hopeful that the total this year will run to 60,000 acres.

If Subject to Colds, Here is Real Good Advice.

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VIENNA TAX RATE LOWERED FOR TOURISTS

Vienna, May 30—To make Vienna more attractive for foreign visitors during the impending tourist season the municipality of Vienna has decided on an all round cutting down of the taxes levied on visitors. The tax on rooms will be reduced 20 per cent and the tax on public amusements from 30 to 50 per cent. These reductions will be in force from May 1

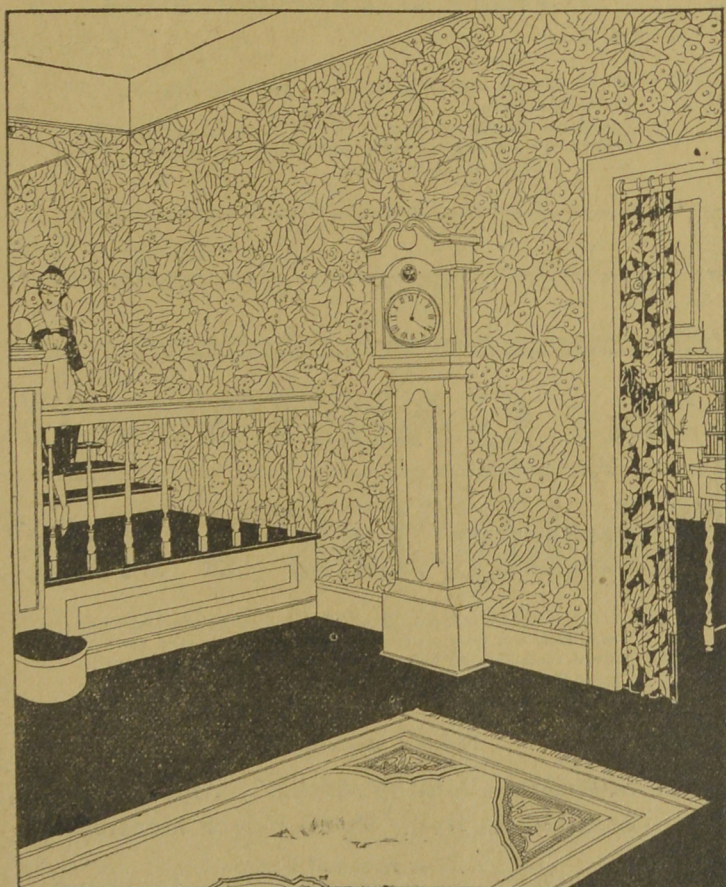
to August 31 and it is expected they will have a stimulating effect on the tourist traffic.

While the recent months have been characterized by unusual dullness in nearly all hotels and boarding houses the rooms are beginning to fill again and there are many signs that this summer will not remain far behind the record figure of foreigners registered last year. Several hotels like the Old Bristol have undertaken extensive alterations and repairs which are now finished, enabling them to cope with a large number of guests.

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