

GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE DISTRICT.

Topography.

The greater portion of the Edmonton district is a rolling plain of low relief, partly wooded; the surface features of which are due to the erosion of soft rocks consisting of sandstones and shales; through this plain the easterly flowing waters of the Saskatchewan have worn the deep channel which the river occupies. At Edmonton this depression, amounting to nearly 160 feet and from crest to crest a distance of about three-quarters of a mile, separates the city from Strathcona, on the south bank.

This valley, with supplementary branch valleys, forms the principal topographical feature of the district. Other streams which cross the coal-bearing belt also have valleys which form important features; but for the coal mining industry their importance arises principally from their erosive action, which by wearing away the confining walls of the valleys exposes the coal seams so that mining can be cheaply carried on by level entries.

Transportation.

The city of Edmonton is becoming an important railway centre; from it radiating lines already built and under construction give connexion eastwards with the other provinces by three railways. Southward from Strathcona, railway connexion is already made at Calgary with the main line of the Canadian Pacific railway and projected lines eastward to Winnipeg. To the west, two transcontinental roads are being built, also a short spur line runs northward, at present only to Morinville, but shortly either it or a new one will be continued to the Athabaska river.

Commercial Possibilities.

The location of the capital of the Province, at Edmonton, at once raised the importance of the city commercially. Surrounded as it is by fertile agricultural land which is fast filling up with settlers, only a short time will elapse before manufacturing industries will be seeking its advantages. Already its milling and lumber trade have become important, and a meat packing establishment of large proportions is in operation. The presence of fuel that can be mined in the immediate vicinity is an inducement for the permanent location of other manufacturing ventures.