

THE COMMERCIAL

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The Commercial certainly enjoys a very much larger circulation among the business community of the vast region lying between Lake Superior and the Pacific Coast than any other paper in Canada, daily or weekly. The Commercial also reaches the leading wholesale, commission, manufacturing and financial houses of Eastern Canada.

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TREE CULTURE.

One of the gratifying features in connection with the conservation and development of the natural resources of the west to-day is the increased degree of interest which is being taken in its forest areas and in the production of trees where these are not now to be found. Scientists tell us and historians too that these prairie regions were once to a great extent covered with heavy forest growth and that these have only been destroyed after a long contest with their natural enemy fire. Arguing from this standpoint we are told that it would be a comparatively easy matter so far as natural conditions are concerned to re-forest the prairies providing that the trees could be protected from the enemy which destroyed their predecessors. However this may be, it is sufficient for the present purposes of the inhabitants of the country to know that the cultivation of trees of various hardy varieties around farm and city property in parks and public places is a comparatively easy matter. To get the people interested is the greatest problem which faces the advocates of tree planting, or rather to get them to do something. Thanks to the work of the experimental farms in disseminating knowledge of the proper kinds of trees to plant in each district and of the proper way to plant them much has already been done along this line and many farms throughout the west have their roadways lined with trees and hedges all planted since the settler went on the land, but what has been done so far only serves to accentuate the general want of these useful and ornamental features of every well cared for farm. The work of the experimental farms has gone further too, it should be said, than mere instruction as each year a large number of healthy tree plants are distributed to applicants

throughout the country free for use on their property. This has simplified the business of securing suitable trees very much as nothing is sent out in this way which cannot be thoroughly depended upon.

But so far only a beginning has been made in this line. Every year should see large numbers of trees planted in both town and country until the dead levels of the prairie are turned into veritable bowers of beauty. And not only should this be done for the mere sake of the beauty of the trees. Best authorities are agreed that they have great effect in modifying severity of climate, in equalizing distribution of moisture and in promoting the downfall of same. Professor Macoun says in a recent paper on this subject:

"A tree turns out thousands of leaves and has great roots far down in the ground, and the sun is pumping water out of the tree all day long. It is pumping water out of the depths

treeless regions of Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas, the national government is assisting the settlers to cultivate trees and already some good results have been accomplished. This work is carried on by the division of forestry, under the direction of the department of agriculture. As a result of their very thorough study of the subject the officers of the division say in a recent bulletin on the subject of practical tree planting:

"There is probably not a single inhabited region in the United States where some kinds of trees may not be made to grow when given adequate assistance in the way of cultivation and irrigation. In regions of extremely adverse conditions only the hardiest varieties exist, and then only as stunted, poorly developed specimens, even when the best effort is made to modify the existing conditions. On the other hand in the prairie regions adjacent to natural woodlands many varieties of trees grow almost as well, when once established, as they do in the natural forest. The treeless west



A Bit of Woodland Scenery Near Winnipeg.

Amateur Photo by G. A. Lister.

of the soil and that water for hundreds of miles is passing into the atmosphere. The cutting off of the forest means that the rainfall will be carried off the soil too quickly, and this return to the atmosphere will cease. The atmospheric currents are not interfered with, but are only prevented from taking the humidity out of the soil through the agency of trees. Thus you have the climate suited to the growth of cereals. The humidity received into the air compensates for the want of it in the climate."

The economic value of trees for fuel and building purposes is also of course very great but that is an advantage which we cannot hope to reap here for many years to come.

It is interesting to know in connection with this subject of tree planting that our neighbors across the line to the south are becoming very much alive to its importance and are doing much to remedy the want of trees in the prairie states to the west. In the

presents every intermediate condition between the two extremes, but in every case some adverse conditions, calling for more or less effort on the part of man, must be overcome. If these conditions are overcome, trees will grow; if they are not, they will die."

We see, therefore, that not only have our own Canadian experts in this line pronounced the partial reforestation problem an easy one, depending almost solely upon systematic effort, but the forestry experts of the United States have after years of study arrived at the same conclusion, which makes it reasonable to suppose that as the results of these investigations become better known and appreciated and the settlers on the prairies find time and opportunity the work of tree planting will be resolutely taken up, and pushed on until the desired end is accomplished. Under the wise guidance of the government's forestry and