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## SURVEY WORK IN THE GREAT WEST.

The wealth of Canada's wheat fields has been so extensively advertised to the world, and the wonderful growth of western population within the last few years has been so much written about that the ordinary stay-at-home citizen who has never travelled over the great transcontinental railway lines and learned at first hand of the development and possibilities of the Great West has come to regard conditions there as similar to those in the older provinces. But the day of the pioneer in Western Canada is not yet past. There are immense areas which still offer splendid opportunities to the landseeker, the timber cruiser and the prospector.

The new settler must be either preceded or very soon followed by the Dominion land surveyor. About forty years ago surveys of lands controlled by the Department of the Interior were commenced in the vicinity of Winnipeg, and to-day an area has been subdivided, available for sale, lease, or settlement, over twice as large as the whole of Great Britain and Ireland. This year alone over five million acres will be surveyed, an area equal to that portion of Ontario lying east of a line from Belleville to Pembroke. The work is not done, of course, in a single block, but in districts widely separated where the demand justifies it. At present seventy-seven survey parties are in the field for the topographical surveys branch of the Department of Interior, each in charge of a Dominion land surveyor. About 1,200 men and an equal number of horses are employed and a very complete organization of the year's campaign is necessary to keep up with the constant demand for surveyed land. Each succeeding year the farmer encroaches on the domain of the fur trader and often the race is between the surveyor and the settler. One follows the other as trade follows the flag, but so well has the trend of settlement been fore-

seen, that it is only in exceptional cases and in remote localities that squatters have to settle on unsurveyed land with the attendant risk of an insecure title.

The west has earned a world-wide reputation as the land of boundless prairie, but there is not a prairie stretch of any extent that is not now marked with the iron stakes of the Dominion land surveyor. The last to be subdivided was that known as Grande Prairie in the Peace River country. But the west has more than prairie; its timbered areas are several times larger than the prairie portions, and those who are acquainted with pioneer conditions in the eastern provinces can testify that fertility of the soil is not confined to the prairie alone.

The men who planned and developed the Dominion system of surveys devised and carried out a scheme which combined simplicity, accuracy and economy. Care was taken to make a proper start and then to build up a network of governing lines on which subsequent subdivision could be based. This was a distinct departure from the old patchwork systems, which allowed errors of survey to accumulate until the whole work was vitiated. Such haphazard methods