

been improved and extended from time to time. Applicants for assistance in tree-planting are classified geographically and, in the Spring, the inspectors cover their several routes visiting the applicants in turn. These inspectors are trained and practical men, and their skill is placed at the service of the farmers who desire to grow trees. The inspector not only views the place but makes a sketch of it to scale, with notes as to the number and kind of trees recommended. The plan and recommendations are considered at the headquarters of the tree-planting division, and, in the Autumn, the plan with location of proposed plantations is sent to the farmer. Then, in the following Spring, the trees are sent. Meantime, the farmer, under agreement, has prepared the ground. And, under the same agreement, he is bound to cultivate for two years after the trees are in. The inspectors, on their rounds, not merely interview applicants for new trees but inspect the plantations already made in the sections they cover on their rounds.

But, while all this has been going on, the officials have had to keep well in mind the old recipe for making hare soup—"first catch your hare." To plant trees, you must first have the trees. The collection of seed, the making of nurseries, the cutting of willow slips—all this would be worthy of a long article by itself. There are more applications for trees than can be supplied. But that is not to be wondered at, for the staff is limited, the appropriation is limited, and the difficulties are many. But the work goes on. In a little while, at present rate of going, the "treeless prairies" of the West will have a better proportion of forest growth than have great stretches of Old Ontario which, a hundred years ago, were an unbroken forest. What this means for the health, wealth and happiness of the people of the West can be imagined by anyone who has contrasted the

bareness of the new settler's home with the embowered completeness of the home of the old resident. Almost three million trees are distributed and planted yearly, the work now going on much faster than at first. Allowing for the progress made since the last printed report, there must be standing in the West to-day, more than fifteen millions of trees actually supplied by the Forestry and Irrigation Branch. And who can say to what extent the work of afforestation by private individuals and companies has been promoted by the uniform success of these plantations?

As indicated, the Branch has a station at Indian Head as headquarters for this work. At first, the effort was made to carry on the tree-planting service from Ottawa, but experience proved that both efficiency and economy would be promoted by getting in closer touch with the actual work to be done.

The work of protecting the forest, of reforestation by natural or artificial means, and of directing the wise and economical use of this great public source of wealth is another of the great services of this Branch. These operations have to do with the public domain only. The work naturally divides itself into three lines of activity. The first has to do with the protection, development and use of the forest in those territories known as forest reserves. The reader will understand that these are not the spaces known as Dominion Parks. The parks are places for holidaying and for carrying on studies in some of the wider questions of natural history. They are under a separate branch of the Department of the Interior. The Forest Reserves, as the name indicates, are areas in which the forest, and not agriculture, is the main point of consideration. To these areas the rules of agricultural settlement do not apply and from most of them agricultural settlers are rigidly excluded, but everything possible is