

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
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ada, daily or weekly. The Commercial also
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facturing and financial houses of Eastern Canada.

WINNIPEG, JULY 28.

DOMINION FORESTRY INSPECTION.

In the blue book of the department of the interior for the year 1899 the newly appointed chief inspector of timber and forestry, Mr. E. Stewart, makes a most interesting preliminary report on the work which he has done in the way of sizing up the situation in regard to timber and forestry in Canada. Mr. Stewart only assumed the duties of his new office August 15 last, and necessarily this first report is mainly occupied with the results of his first study of the subject. Almost his first act was to make a tour of inspection in the Northwest and British Columbia, which occupied about two months time enabling him to form some idea of the condition of the timber areas in this part of the Dominion and also regarding the important matter of tree culture on the prairie lands of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories. Mr. Stewart finds that the general public have very little idea of the vast extent of country in the west which is properly speaking wooded land, owing to the fact that the Canadian Pacific Railway, the only artery of traffic, runs through prairie land only until it reaches the Rocky Mountains. These timber lands he divides into areas as follows: "The first, which might for convenience be called our Great Northern Forest, extends from Alaska, on the west, to Hudson Bay on the east, and from the North Saskatchewan river and the sixtieth parallel of latitude on the south to the barren lands of the Arctic region. East of James Bay there is the Labrador district. Next we have a timber area of considerable extent lying north of the province of Ontario and south of the North Saskatchewan river, and this same belt extends westerly, growing narrower till it reaches its apex at the junction of the north and south branches of

the Saskatchewan river at Fort a la Corne. Proceeding westerly the next large timber belt we meet with is along the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains and extending from the North Saskatchewan southerly to the international boundary. In addition to these districts there is a considerable extent of timbered land in what is usually known as the prairie belt, notably in Riding mountains, Moose mountains and the Turtle mountains, as well as that found in smaller quantities surrounded on all sides by prairie. The latter though perhaps of not much value to the lumberman, is invaluable to the settlers in the neighborhood, for building, fencing and fuel. Lastly, there is the timber on the Indian reserves."

Speaking of the timber on the foothills south of the Canadian Pacific railway in Alberta, Mr. Stewart says: "This tract extending from the Bow river to the 49th parallel, has been recently set aside as a timber reserve, and as the department, in conjunction with the government of the Northwest Territories is expending considerable money in establishing a system of irrigation for the semi-arid tract east of these hills, it is a matter of the utmost importance to the success of the undertaking that the forest covering alone the valleys of these streams from which the water is taken should not be destroyed; otherwise there will be disastrous floods, followed by equally destructive droughts. The principal danger of destruction of these wooded areas lies in the carelessness of prospecting, hunting and surveying parties and bodies of Indians going into or passing through the country, letting their camp fires spread to the surrounding bush. It is also sometimes the case that fires are started deliberately by ranchers, prospectors and others who want to clear away the trees. A system of guardianship which would include registration of the names, etc., occupying or passing through the timber lands is recommended as one remedy for the fire nuisance. The Cypress Hills and other wooded areas in Alberta, are recommended for the same treatment as the foothills country. Timber lands in the Riding and Duck mountain district of Manitoba are also mentioned as being specially worthy of care to prevent their destruction by fire. Already the government has reserved large areas of wooded country in Manitoba and the Territories for the sake of their timber, and further reservations wherever the value of their timber will warrant it are recommended.

With regard to forestry management, Mr. Stewart says: "That the scientific management of the forests of North America was not commenced earlier in both the United States and Canada will always be a matter of regret. In

nearly every country of Europe a bureau of forestry has long been established, and in India and even in the Australasian colonies and in South Africa the matter has received greater attention at the hands of the government than in Canada or even the United States till within the last few years." "Among the nations of the world Germany stands first in scientific managements of its forests, even private owners of forests are compelled to observe certain rules of action with regard to deforestation. In some states of the Empire improvident and wasteful methods are absolutely prohibited, the law being enforced by officers of the state, and the net revenue to the empire after paying all expenses is something over \$12,000,000 annually." When it is considered that the forest areas of Canada are immensely wider than those of Germany, it may be seen what possibilities there are in their conservation.

While there are certain districts of our prairie regions where there are bluffs of timber which would probably be sufficient for the requirements of the settlers, if the young timber were allowed to grow, there is still a very large area where tree planting will have to be resorted to if the country is ever to enjoy the many advantages which this division of the vegetable kingdom alone can furnish. The results of experiments carried on at the Brandon and Indian Head experimental farms has abundantly proven the feasibility of tree culture on the prairies, and many different kinds of trees and shrubs have been found adapted to growth on prairie lands, so that it should be an easy matter if persistent and scientific methods are applied to the task to create in a very few years in every settled part of this western country a heritage of wooded lands which will be of inestimable benefit, not only to the present, but all future generations.

West Selkirk.

The town of West Selkirk, situated on the west bank of the Red river, twenty-three miles from Winnipeg, is the fish town of Manitoba, being the port for a large number of vessels employed in the lake Winnipeg fisheries. It is only a short distance from the mouth of the river, the channel of which is of a sufficient depth to allow of large vessels coming up this far. In addition to the large number of craft of various kinds already employed, the Dominion Fish Company has put on a new tug, the Chieftain, and has fitted up the steamer Princess, which has been lying unused for a number of years, and is now using it as a freighter, while Roderick Smith has also put on a new tug, the Highlander. Storehouses have been built at different points along the lake, in which the fish are kept until taken by the steamers to Selkirk, where, after being properly cleaned and made ready for the market, they are placed in a freezer, the temperature of which is kept at several degrees below zero by the use of ammonia. The fish are loaded