

a diameter of five feet. It is found in thick forests of Spain, the south-eastern part of France, and in Algeria and Senegambia in Africa. The quality of the cork depends very much upon the situation of the land, that exposed to the greatest heat being the best. Each tree yields cork of two different thicknesses, the bark growing on the northern side of the tree being the thinner.

—*It.*

A LAND OF WHEAT.—Over the plains of Manitoba once rolled the waters of an inland sea. The southern edge of the great ice sheet in the glacial epoch prevented the escape of north flowing streams, and they formed a mighty lake. Boulders from the Rocky Mountains, or from the eastern Laurentian hills are now seen here and there, where they were dropped by floating ice cakes many hundreds of miles from their place of origin. Then came the recession of the ice, the disappearance of the lake rich in cretaceous and nitrogenous elements, and, in course of time, rose a mighty forest, as great and as dense, it is believed, as those which now cover the Pacific slopes of the coast mountains. It is certain also that great forests covered these plains before the glacial epoch. The lake deposits, the forest growths, were among the elements that helped to produce the almost inexhaustible wheat-bearing soil of Manitoba; and to-day her farmers are happy in the prospect of the greatest harvest they ever reaped. It is believed that the wheat of Manitoba will average forty bushels to the acre. Many farmers say it will average forty-five bushels. Men who have seen many seasons of Minnesota wheat raising said in Manitoba last month that they had never looked upon such

wheat fields before. Those great fields stretching for scores of miles around Brandon, Portage la Prairie, and Deloraine are worth crossing the continent to see.—*It.*

FOSSILS COLLECTED ON THE CANADIAN PLAINS.—Just now Swift Current is interesting because on the banks of the little river have been found a large number of mammalian and fish remains, in the tertiary rocks [rocks formed in the first period of the age of mammals] that crop above the stream. Among the specimens is the largest species of hoofed animals analogous to the rhinoceros that has ever yet been discovered. Even in early tertiary times these great beasts, it is evident, were roaming through the forests that then existed on the now treeless prairie of Canada; for these plains, which take some days of speedy railroad travel to cross, were once covered by lofty forests, and it is probable that great fires, such as to-day are killing an enormous quantity of the timber in the northwestern states and in British Columbia, were partly responsible for the disappearance of these ancient forests. The best portion of the skull of one specimen of these rhinoceroses described by Prof. Cope is about three feet long and eighteen inches across, with the frontal bones and snout preserved. The teeth are beautifully preserved, and some of them are nearly four inches across, three inches thick and nearly four inches in length, with zigzag and sharply cut crowns. Many other bones of various portions of the skeleton were also found, making in all a beautiful display of fossil bones belonging to as huge and ferocious a beast as prowls to day in the jungles of an African or Indian forest.—*It.*