

ceptible grade, and the river is almost continuously rapid all the way to Rupert Bay. But above this the character of the drainage area of this great river may be described as a generally level or slightly undulating plateau, 500 to 1,000 feet above the sea, broken at intervals by hills and ridges. The soil is usually of a clayey nature, and this imparts a muddy quality to the water of most of the branches.

The hydrographic basin explored by Dr. Bell is as large as the inhabited parts of Ontario, Quebec or the State of New York. It has an area of 70,000 square miles or more, and is, therefore, considerably greater than England; and, as Dr. Bell thinks that most of it is fit for cultivation, it is evident we have here a very important addition to the more valuable portion of the Dominion. In a general way this region lies south of England in latitude, and its climate appears to be fully as good as that of the shores of the lower St. Lawrence. Wheat has been found to ripen on the Missinaibi and Abitibi Rivers to the west, and at Lake St. John to the east of the centre of this area, so that it may be assumed that it will also ripen in the intervening tract, while barley ripens at Rupert House and Moose Factory, both of which lie to the northward of the district in question.

The whole country is well wooded, the district having fortunately escaped the fires which have been so prevalent in most of our northern forests. White and red pine are found in the southern parts, but the staple trees of the region are white and black spruces and the tamarack. White birch and Banksian pine, both of fine quality, are also very abundant and there is a mixture of balsam-fir, cedar, balsam-poplar, aspen and a few other trees. When this region is opened for settlement by the construction of railways, it will afford an almost inexhaustible supply of the finest pulp wood—to say nothing of good spruce and tamarack timber.

As to economic minerals, Dr. Bell reports the prospect as excellent. The Huronian rocks underlie a large area; and they are as likely to abound in the ores of various useful metals here as elsewhere.

Game was unaccountably scarce throughout the whole region, but fish was tolerably plentiful. Except near the "Height of Land" no Indians inhabit the country, and this fact may help to account for the general ignorance which has prevailed in reference to the existence of this large river. Dr. Bell secured the services of the only Indian who knew the main stream as far as Mattagami Lake, but this man could not tell even from hearsay where the river discharged into the sea. But supposing the stream to have been known to the Aborigines, Dr. Bell's results are to be regarded as a discovery, since it is through them that this great river and its connections have been made known to geography.

A NEW REGION.

475. Mr. Henry O'Sullivan, Inspector of Surveys to the Province of Quebec, makes a report to the Hon. E. J. Flynn, Commissioner of Crown Lands, dated 15th May, 1895, giving details of his explorations in the region beyond the sources of the Ottawa River not far from the territory in which Dr. Bell has been at work.