

COMMISSION OF CONSERVATION.

personnel of the Commission truly representative of the entire Dominion, but Parliament legislated with the further object of ensuring in its membership a high degree of scholarship, of scientific knowledge and of administrative experience.

In function and status the Commission is purely advisory. While dependent financially upon an annual appropriation from the federal Parliament, it forms no portion of the ordinary governmental administration and possesses no executive or administrative powers. It is authorized solely to study, investigate and advise; the effectiveness of its work depends upon the merit of its recommendations which must, accordingly, be in every instance based upon complete and accurate information. Referring in his inaugural speech to the exceptional character of the Commission, the Chairman tersely defined its status as follows: "In a sentence, the Commission is a body constituted for the purpose of collecting exact information, deliberating upon, digesting and assimilating this information so as to render it of practical benefit to the country, and for the purpose of advising upon all questions of policy that may arise in reference to the actual administration of natural resources where the question of their effective conservation and economical use is concerned."

Organization and Work.—Broadly speaking, the efforts of the Commission have been directed mainly toward: (1) the taking of an inventory of Canada's natural resources; (2) the moulding of public opinion and the advising of administrative authorities with regard to more intelligent management of the same. For efficient organization the Commission formed itself into seven committees dealing respectively with Lands, Forests, Waters and Water Powers, Minerals, Fisheries, Game and Fur-Bearing Animals, Public Health, and Press and Co-operating Associations. Under the direction of these committees, field investigations respecting various natural resources have been undertaken by a staff of technical experts; substantial progress has been made in the task of national stock-taking and towards the solution of many administrative problems.

Lands.—The Committee on Lands, recognizing that successful agriculture is the greatest factor in the prosperity and progress of Canada, and that soil fertility can be conserved only through the practice of scientific agriculture, has undertaken the task of studying and endeavouring to improve farming methods throughout the Dominion. Actual conditions were first investigated by a detailed agricultural survey of representative farming sections in the various provinces. On the whole, the information secured indicated that the introduction of proper farming methods would double the value of Canada's field crops in twenty years. Constructive measures, to supplement the survey work, were undertaken in 1912. In each district visited for survey purposes, illustration farms were conducted to demonstrate practically the benefits to be derived from scientific agriculture. Very gratifying results were secured, and the objects of the Commission in initiating it having been fully achieved, the work has been taken up and expanded under the federal Department of Agriculture. Educational work to improve Canadian agriculture has been persistently