

FORESTS OF OREGON.

State Contains 40,228 Square Miles of Timber Lands.

In Professional Paper No. 4, United States geological survey, now in press, Henry Gannett gives the result of an estimate of the stand and character of the timber of Oregon.

In the nineteenth annual report of the United States geological survey there was published, says Mr. Gannett, an estimate of the standing timber in Oregon, which was based upon cruises made by the Oregon and California Railroad company, the Willamette Valley and Cascade Range Wagon Road company and by lumbermen. Since that time a large amount of additional information concerning the forests of the state has been obtained, in part by detailed examinations made by J. B. Leiberg, in part through reconnaissances made by the Northern Pacific Railroad company, but mainly through examinations made by A. J. Johnson, of Astoria, Oregon. Mr. Johnson has been employed upon this work the greater part of two years, and has visited nearly every timbered township in the state. Most of the area of the Cascade forest reserve lying north of latitude 43 degrees was, however, unvisited, and the information concerning it is scanty.

The area of Oregon is 96,030 square miles, of which 1470 square miles are water surface; 28,843 square miles, or about thirty per cent, are covered with timber of merchantable size and quality; 40,228 square miles, or forty-three per cent, are wooded, including in this the area of merchantable timber; 51,980 square miles, or fifty-five per cent, are at present open country, including the areas which were opened before the settlement by whites and those which have been cleared by settlement; the remainder of the state consists of rocky desert country in the Cascade range and in the plateaus to the east.

The crest of the Cascade range is a natural dividing line between two very different portions of Oregon. West of this the rainfall is heavy, and consequently the forests are, as a whole, dense and in parts extremely luxuriant. East of that boundary the rainfall is light, and the forests are comparatively scanty and open, and the stand of timber is small. The total area of that part of the state west of the crest of the range is 28,877 square miles, of which 15,089 square miles, or fifty-two per cent, are occupied by merchantable timber, and twenty-four per cent are open country. In contrast to this, the eastern part of the state comprises 65,983 square miles, of which 13,754 square miles, or only twenty-one per cent, are timbered, and sixty-eight per cent are open country.

The most startling feature shown by the land classification map of this state is the extent of the burned areas, especially in the coast ranges and in the northern half of the Cascades. These burned areas comprise altogether not less than seven per cent of the area of the state. Out of a total area, at one time timbered, not less than eighteen per cent has been destroyed by fire.

The present stand of timber in the western portion of the state being approximately 154,713 million feet, and the burned area being about one-third of the timbered area, the destruction of timber by fire in this part of the state has been approximately 51,000 million feet. Similarly, it appears that in the eastern portion of the state the destruction amounts to about 3,000 million feet, a total of 54,000 million feet. Thus, at one dollar per thousand feet, the present average

stumpage price, gives a total loss by fire of \$54,000,000. This is a high price to pay for carelessness. The destruction has been even greater here than in Washington, where, as was estimated, 43,000 million feet have been destroyed in a similar manner.

Much of this burned country is rapidly reforesting and is now covered with a stand of young trees. Areas are reported, however, which were burned many years ago, on which there is no vegetation larger than brush and ferns, trees of any species not having yet obtained a foothold.

The earliest burns in the state of which we have record occurred in 1843. From that time down to the present, fires of greater or less magnitude have occurred yearly, mainly in the late summer and early fall, when everything is driest.

The timber of Oregon is in density and quality closely comparable with that of Washington, and over most of the area the species of trees are very nearly the same. The total stand of timber in the state is estimated at 213,398 million feet, board measure, an average stand per acre of timber land of 12,200 feet. As in Washington, the stand differs widely in different parts of the state. West of the crest of the Cascades the total stand of timber is estimated at 171,780 million feet. Thus eighty per cent of the total timber of the state is found in a region which is thirty per cent of the total area of the state. The average stand of timber on the timbered land of this region is not less than 17,700 feet per acre. The total stand of timber upon the area east of the Cascades is only 41,618 million feet, and the average stand per acre 4,700 feet.

Not only do these two sections of the state differ widely in the extent of their forests, but they differ also in species. Of the timber of Oregon, red fir constitutes not less than sixty-six per cent, a proportion somewhat larger than in Washington. Pine, including yellow and sugar pine, constitutes eighteen per cent, a proportion much larger than in Washington. Spruce constitutes five per cent, the same as in Washington; hemlock five per cent and cedar only two per cent, being much less than in the more northern state. In the western part of the state red fir forms seventy-nine per cent of the forest; east of the crest yellow pine forms eighty per cent of the forest, with red fir holding second rank.

Mr. Gannett gives a classification of the lands in the various counties of the state, with the amount and classification of timber in each county.

Dawson Exporting Rubber Boots.

For the first time in its history, Dawson is exporting something besides gold and tinhorn gamblers. From gold to decayed rubber boots and overshoes is quite a drop, but the exports of the Yukon have descended from one extreme to the other. In a thriving gold camp castoff articles are not looked upon as being of great value, but it remained for an enterprising gentleman by the name of Stein to recognize the money to be made by relieving the stringency of the rubber market of the United States. Mr. Stein found no difficulty in picking up any number of old rubber pedal coverings on the creeks surrounding Dawson. In a short time he gathered up thirty tons of the material and shipped it out to Puget sound. Mr. Stein will realize eight cents per pound on the shipment. News concerning the new type of export was brought down on the steamer Amur, which arrived last week.

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