

second growth of grass, which will be from three to five inches high by the 1st of August if the country is not burnt over by prairie fires. It is simply because the season is so much earlier than it is in Ontario that persons unaccustomed and not looking carefully at the face of the country, miscalculate the character of the province.

THE FUEL AND BUILDING MATERIAL.

Mention is made of people leaving there on the ground that there is neither water, fuel, nor building material. I will confine my remarks on these points chiefly to Alberta, regarding which the hon. member for Marquette (Mr. Watson) should have informed himself before he addressed the house. As to wood for fuel, there is not much in that country, but nature, through its wisdom, has compensated that district by supplying an almost unlimited quantity of coal. The result of my observation is that I can unhesitatingly state that in the whole Province of Alberta I saw no place, nor do I believe there is a locality, where a farmer with his own cart, need haul fuel more than a distance of five miles, and in half the cases within that distance. As to building material, as far west as Brandon—I am now coming back to Manitoba—I know good building material. American pine and our own Rat Portage pine, is sold within a few cents per thousand as cheaply as it can be purchased to-day in the lumber yards at Ottawa. (Cheers.) I saw as good dressed siding for buildings sold retail to hundreds of people at \$25 per thousand, as you see in the Ottawa market to-day. Doors, frames and window sashes, with glass, can be bought even cheaper than in Ottawa.

Mr. WATSON.—I never saw good siding sold in that country at the prices named.

Mr. FERGUSON (Leeds and Grenville).—I did, and I did not hesitate to help men who went from my county to load some of the lumber on their waggon. As to the price of fuel, there is such an abundance so easily reached, that with ordinary and reasonable opportunities given to mining companies by the government, which, no doubt, will be given, and such rates as I found proposed for the transportation of coal by the Canadian Pacific Railway, coal will be supplied almost as far east as Winnipeg—I know as far east as Brandon—to settlers all along the railway line and to the villages and towns which are rapidly springing up, within twelve months

from to-day, at 25 per cent. less than coal of the same character is now supplied to towns and villages bordering on the banks of the St. Lawrence. (Cheers.) As to the question of transportation, I do not wish to divulge the profits of any coal miner, but I have the most reliable information that coal can be put on the surface there with very large profit to miners, at \$1.50 per ton, and the agreement for transportation which was being made while I was there, was 40 cents a ton per 100 miles. (Hear, hear.) Anyone can calculate the cost to carry it 400 miles and lay it down.

THE WATER SUPPLY.

As to water: there are places in that country where water is scarce, but that only applies to a portion of the country immediately beyond Moose Jaw. It is not that there is not water in the soil. Here is the difficulty: All over that district there are immense deposits of pure tenacious clay, almost pure aluminium, that is, clay without any porosity whatever, and so the water only permeates the gravel beds. When you find a district thus overlaid, you will find no water except surface water until you penetrate a gravel bed; but these districts are very few and scarce. Mention has been made of a locality where the railway company went 300 feet to find water. They did that to suit their own convenience at a special point on a railway line. I know, as a matter of fact, that at a station west of that point, a man who went to start a store there, acting on my suggestion, went to the side hill and sunk a well into the gravel instead of boring down into the clay bed. I had to go south, and on returning ten days afterwards, I drank from a bucket of water taken from that well which was only twelve feet deep, in which there were five feet of as pure water as I ever drank in my life. (Cheers.) This difficulty in respect of water only applies to the central portion of the Province of Assiniboia. Running east from the mountains, through the Province of Alberta and south of the North Saskatchewan, there are from eight to ten beautiful rivers, the character of the water of which, unless seen, cannot be appreciated. We all talk of the beautiful water of the St. Lawrence, but that cannot compare with it. As an experiment, I dropped a five cent piece into one of the streams, and I distinctly distinguished it at the depth of a long fishing rod which I had at the time. This is the char-