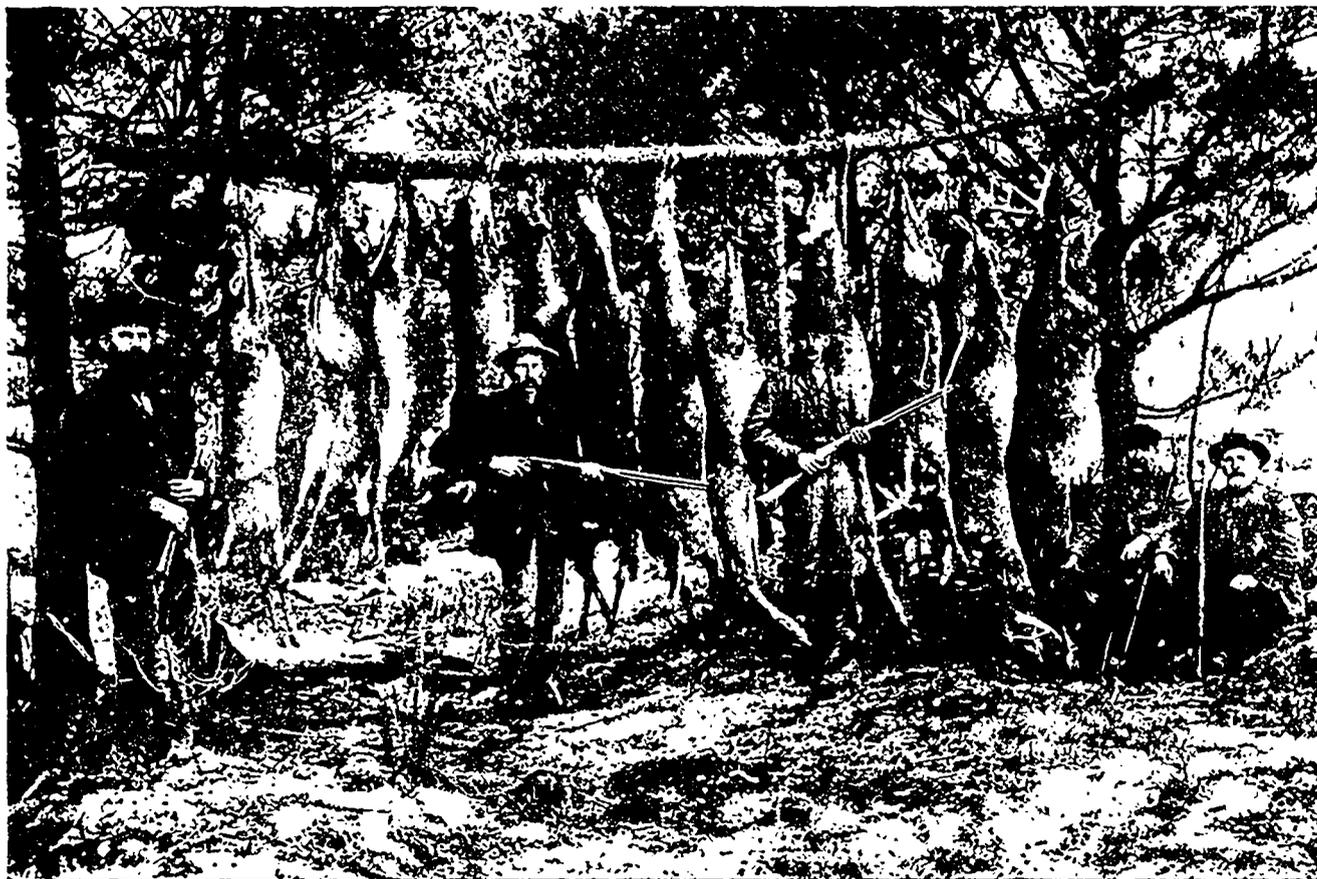


way. It was so planned that the best possible opportunity was given to us to study out from personal observation all that was best worth seeing, and it is my purpose in this necessarily short article to state the impressions left on my mind of North-Western Ontario as a field for settlement as compared with the other newer portions of the Dominion, and in doing so I will deal with the different sections as they come under my notice.

At the outset it may be as well to say that Northern Ontario can never be a great farming country. It is too rough and rugged, and many of the smaller sections of good land are so situated as to be valueless as farm lands. There are, however, many large stretches of fertile soil which may properly be spoken of as large areas, if measured in comparison with Great Britain or the smaller countries of Europe, yet are but of little extent when set beside the great area of grain and pasture land lying between Rat Portage and the foot hills of the Rocky Mountains. Nor can these Northern Ontario lands be recommended as a

market for farming lands. In this valley of the Kaministiquia, in which Fort William is situated, there are from 10,000 to 11,000 acres of deep alluvial soil, much of it equal in producing power to that of the best lands of Manitoba. On our way out to the above-mentioned farm we crossed a stretch of poor, light, sandy soil. After passing over this our first genuine surprise was when we came to the first of the farms in what is known as the Slate River valley. There are many farmers here working under favorable conditions. The land produces heavy crops. It is reasonably near one of the very best markets, passably good roads, and many of these farms have on them well-equipped homesteads. Talking to these men they were found to be well satisfied with their surroundings. The townships in which much of this good land is situated are Oliver, Paipoonee, and Blake, the last-named being in a measure inaccessible until two bridges are built and a few miles of colonization roads made. It is a pretty safe prediction to make, that in the near future the Ontario



The Result of a Six Day Hunting Expedition in New Ontario, November, 1898. (Kindly loaned by F. W. Hodson).

home for the well-to-do Ontario farmer, surrounded as he is with so much that goes to make life enjoyable. There is, however, much to be said in its favor as a field of settlement for the strong man with small, or, what is better, moderate means and a growing family for whom he is desirous of providing homes.

Our drive of fifteen miles back from Fort William was the first opportunity we had of seeing the rich farming lands of which we heard so much about at the twin towns (Port Arthur and Fort William). The objective point of the drive being Mr. Piper's 1,100 acre farm. For a few miles out the land seemed of great richness and admirably suited for mixed farming where stock raising was made a special feature—or as we were told, and as it also appeared to us, well adapted for market gardening purposes. Such being the case, we were somewhat surprised to find that although in close proximity to such an excellent market as Fort William, but very little of the land was occupied. On inquiry we found that it is nearly all held by speculators, and at such a price as practically places it out of the

Legislature will do something in the way of carrying out much called for and necessary work in the direction of opening up this township for settlement. It would occupy too much space to describe in any way minutely what came under our notice, but I must say a little about the Piper farm as illustrating what can be done on these rich farm lands when skill, good management, and the use of money are brought to bear in clearing and improving them. Here we found a farm of 1,100 acres of deep fertile soil, with 200 acres brought under cultivation. The cost of clearing being a small affair compared to that which had to be borne by the early settlers in Eastern or Southern Ontario.

On this farm is a large bank barn, 60 x 90, with stabling for over 100 cattle and horses, but even this was found to be insufficient to house the bulky crops, and at the time of our visit a large hay-barn was being built. The crops of clover grown on this farm are simply immense. It is quite within the mark to say that we saw clover growing there that would produce fully three tons to the acre, and surpassing anything that I, at least, have seen in any other part