

now the sun had arisen on them. The railway was at their doors, to carry their stock and garden stuff, their butter, eggs and chickens to as hungry a market as the heart of farmer could desire. The company believes that there are fertile little valleys and patches of good land all the way to Missanabie, and so they have agreed with the Government of the Province to place on their lands, or the lands of the Crown adjacent to their line, one thousand male settlers annually for the next ten years. In consideration of this and other covenants, they are to receive, in fee simple, 7,400 acres of land for every mile of the 200 they are constructing to Missanabie. The wisdom of granting in fee simple such huge blocks of land to companies is certainly debatable, though more can be said for it in this case than in almost any other. To give the spruce for making pulp is all right; to give the pine on the usual terms is all right; and the grant should include ores, mines and minerals. But the experience of the United States, and Canadian experience in almost every Province, and in the Northwest where all the chickens have not yet come home to roost, is dead against creating great land-owning companies. They soon develop into absentee landlords of the worst description, without bowels of mercies, without bodies to be kicked or shot, and without souls to be consigned to the pit at the final judgment. In a new country, railroads are not only indispensable, but they must be built by the state or companies must be aided to build them, as liberally as each case requires. But experience seems to teach that it is wiser in the end, to give money grants or to guarantee the company's bonds, than to give good land. Build the road, and if there is fairly fertile soil, settlers will find their way in, to take up homesteads, and they will soon absolutely own their own farms, and not be in bondage to a company.

The necessity for building the line to Missanabie is apparent. But where is the need, and what is the object of push-

ing it 300 miles farther north? I am informed that the areas of pulp-wood and of mineral-bearing rock are more promising on Hudson's Bay than on the Lake Superior watershed; and, besides, the sea is there, and that means fisheries, at a distance of 500 miles from the Sault, whence fish can be shipped to Chicago on one side and St. Paul and Minneapolis on the other. Salt water fish are now carried to these markets over 2,000 and 3,000 miles of rail. How can Atlantic fish compete with their Hudson's Bay kith and kin, once the 500-mile iron bridge has been built?

The Manitoulin line is perhaps the most promising of the three. This great and fertile island, the largest in the world surrounded by fresh water, has hitherto had no market for its products and has been isolated for weeks from the rest of the world twice a year. Population has, therefore, been attracted to it but slowly, in spite of its stock-raising capabilities. No wonder that promises of a railway are demanded and freely made to do duty every time an election comes round. A friend writes me: "Were it not for Mr. Clergue's connection with it, the present renewal of the project would be universally regarded by our people as a mere election dodge. We now feel sure. The Sudbury end of the line will be built first, and I believe that it will then be pushed across the channel to Manitoulin. The line will open up a very rich region on the north shore, a district rich in copper, silver, nickel and iron, also in timber and pulp-wood. From the mouth of the Whitefish River to Little Current, there are few natural difficulties to overcome in building the line or in crossing. There is only one navigable channel and it is narrow and runs right past the town. The rest of the channel at this point is filled with a series of low-lying islands, composed of flat rock, of limestone formation, with scarcely any soil. Ultimately, the line will be pushed across the island to a point on the south or Lake Huron shore, where I believe there are one or two good harbours. The