

SOIL CHARACTERISTICS.

The soil of the valleys and other cultivable tracts varies greatly in its constituent elements and aspect. There are clay soils of different degrees of heaviness and shades of color, and loams both argillaceous and sandy, besides tracts of black mould of great fertility enriched by the decayed vegetation of centuries. Some stretches of sandy soil are too poor to repay cultivation unless heavily manured, but they are for the most part well timbered and capable of affording excellent bush pasturage in connection with the richer lands adjoining. White clover is indigenous to the soil and abounds almost everywhere and tremendous crops of red clover are also raised.

SAULT STE. MARIE SECTION.

The feature that from a purely agricultural point of view is regarded as the principal drawback of the district—the large quantity of rocky and sterile country to be found along the water front—is in fact a source of prosperity and stimulus to an industrial influx, as these apparently valueless areas have been proved to be rich in mineral wealth. Gold, silver, copper and iron deposits have been discovered. The greatest known supply of nickel in the world is contained in the formation found in the southeastern portion of the District, although the centre of the present development, Sudbury, is a few miles outside the boundaries of Algoma. Nickel mining nevertheless has an important bearing upon the opening up and development of this district, as the smelting and refining of nickel is a leading industry of the town of Sault Ste. Marie, the commercial and manufacturing centre of the district. Within a very few years this town has attained prominence as a rapidly growing and industrial community, where the raw material of the region tributary to it is worked up into finished articles of manufacture.

Sault Ste. Marie in the southwestern angle of the district is situated on the St. Mary's River, which forms the international boundary between Canada and the United States. The water power furnished by the Falls and its accessibility by means of the navigation system of the great lakes, has contributed greatly to its development as the leading town in the district. The branch line of the Canadian Pacific Railway has brought it within 24 hours' journey of either Montreal or Toronto. Ship canals on both the Canadian and American sides of the river constitute it an important point on the great international system of inland navigation. The town had a population of 7,169 in 1901 which is rapidly increasing.