

skimming path away to the southward, whence comes a cool breeze fresh from the broad traverse toward which long vistas are opening out between far-off islets and fading away into misty space.

AN EXTREMELY FERTILE DISTRICT.

"Fort Frances is at the head of navigation on Rainy River, and some 80 or 90 miles from its mouth. During the trip I have just completed I have been able to learn something by personal observation concerning the country through which the river runs, and from what I have seen I must in candour admit that for settlers of moderate or small means I do not know of a spot in the Dominion offering a more inviting field for immigration. Here there are no prairies, it is true, and every foot of land that the settler cultivates must first be cleared. On the other hand, however, the soil is of practically inexhaustible fertility while every tree on the settler's claim is of more or less immediate value to him. Here he has material for buildings, fencing, and fuel ready to his hand, and yet the labor of clearing off this light timber is comparatively trifling. There are few, if any large stumps to remove, and scarcely a log to be seen that two men could not handle with comparative ease. The lumbermen engaged in these districts bring a market for all the farm produce he can raise right to his own door. In fact all the farmer has to do to sell his produce is to step into his birch canoe, paddle out and hail almost any passing tug and sell for cash every dollar's worth of produce he has to spare. But should the rapid influx and increasing prosperity of settlers so increase the supply of farm produce as to make it outrun the demand, the Rainy River farmer has cheap and unbroken water communication with Rat Portage, during the whole season of navigation, where he can put his produce on board the C. P. R. for the markets of the world. That he will ever have occasion to do this, however, is extremely doubtful. There is very little farming country near Rat Portage, and it will take far more than the farm supplies of Rainy River to meet the wants of the very large mining, lumbering and manufacturing population that is sure to pour in there within the next few years.

"The fertility of the soil in this region is wonderful, a fact amply proven by the fact that the Hudson Bay Company has raised excellent crops off land that has been under crop steadily for over forty years without receiving a single pound of manure. Indeed the settlers now farming along the Canadian shore of the river raise magnificent crops every year. The winters are severe, but the locations are so shelt-