

make much improvement, but having secured a homestead and pre-emption, they are loitering around, putting in their time until they can secure the patent of their claims, which they then hope to sell at largely enhanced prices. I believe that it was a serious mistake to allow unmarried men to pre-empt land at all, as one hundred and sixty acres of a homestead was quite sufficient for their occupation.

As I have previously referred to the immense

#### NATURAL ADVANTAGES FOR STOCK RAISING

in this country, I need not say much about it now; but a farmer who has worked hard for eight or ten years to clear sufficient meadow and pasture lands to feed an ordinary number of live stock, can appreciate the advantage of having all this and much more ready to his hand without any labor on his part; and a family that has plenty of cows to milk evenings and mornings, will scarcely suffer the pangs of hunger, even when there is little else in the larder. I am sorry to say that I have seen numbers of families living from 150 to 200 miles west from Winnipeg who had not a drop of milk to whiten their black tea, or a bit of butter to eat with their bread, because forsooth, somebody thought that the N. P. was a good thing to encourage settlement in the North-West, even if it entirely prevented Montana drovers from bringing good grade cows to the settlers' doors and selling them at about half the price that they now cost in Winnipeg.

The trifling cost of road-making in the North-West, where at certain seasons you can drive a loaded team almost anywhere you please, may seem of not much advantage to some people who have not had this difficulty to contend with; but

#### ROADMAKING

used to be quite an item in the bill of fare provided for new settlers in the other provinces. When I was a boy I assisted my father to make a corduroy road nearly half a mile long leading from his farm to the main road, and I have no hesitation in saying that there was more work performed in making that bit of road, than was performed in opening and making the more than 2,000 miles of trails travelled over by me last summer in the North-West, excepting the Pembina Branch Railway and a few miles in and around Winnipeg.

The good class of settlers, especially in the Western settlements, is a considerable advantage to those who may wish to locate in that country; but I may refer to this more at length at some other time.

#### HOUSE BUILDING AND FENCE MAKING IN THE NORTH WEST—A NOVEL METHOD OF SINKING POSTS.

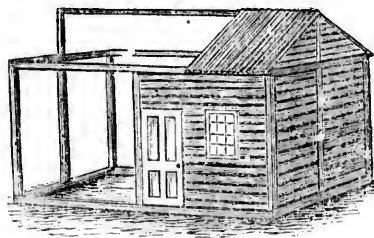
SIR,—In a country where timber is scarce the erection of houses and fences will always be an important consideration, especially to the first settlers; and perhaps some readers of the WIRELESS may have a curiosity to learn something more about the way houses and fences are built in Manitoba and the North-West Territory. Except at the Stony Mountains, south of Rockwood, and in the bed of the Red River at St. Andrews, I did not see in the whole country anything like a quarry from which large quantities of limestone could be got for building purposes. I saw some

#### VERY GOOD SANDSTONE QUARRIES

on the shores and islands of Lake Winnipeg from which the future city of Selkirk can secure an abundant supply of building and paving stones. The rock which underlies the whole country consists of white limestone, but it seems to be so shelly in most places as to be unfit for building purposes. There are only a few stone buildings in the country, and, excepting the Penitentiary at Rockwood, they are all rough built. Excellent white brick is made from the clay which abounds in nearly the whole country, and at some future time brick will be used extensively both in towns and country places in the construction of buildings, but hitherto scarcely any brick buildings have been erected, except in Winnipeg, and even here there are not more than thirty or forty brick houses, although there is probably twice that number of "bricked" houses, or buildings lined on the outside with one thickness of brick. Were it not for the unnecessarily high prices of brick and the very high charges of brick-layers for their work, Lick houses would be the cheapest and best buildings in the greater part of the country. Much the greater number of houses in Winnipeg are small frame houses, clap-boarded and painted white on the outside, which, with the white brick and white stone, gives them a white appearance, strongly contrasting with the black mud pavements. Except in the parish of Kildonan, nearly all the houses in the country places are of rude construction and rather small in size. In many cases the farmers are

#### WELL ABLE TO ERECT BETTER BUILDINGS,

but are waiting until the railway is opened eastward to Lake Superior, when lumber will be much cheaper than hitherto. In the parts of the country where moderately large poplar timber is found, the walls of the houses are built much on the same plan as log buildings are in the eastern



provinces; but in a great many places sufficient large timber cannot be got, except at very great expense, and the houses are built on the plan shown in the accompanying cut, which represents a partly completed house of the most common size, twenty-four by twenty feet. The frame consists of two sills and two plates, each twenty-four feet long, and as many more of twenty feet long; also eight posts ten feet long—sills, plates and posts being squared to about six inches. There are also square posts about seven feet long, standing upright above the centre of the end plates to support the ridge-pole, which is usually a round stick of the same length as the building, and five or six inches in diameter. Near each end of the ridge-pole there is