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THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

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J. DEARNESS.

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THE PRODUCTIVE

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The experience of the past century has amply demonstrated, it seems to me, the fact that the world has no trouble in meeting its food supply. The theory of Malthus has been dispelled up to this present date. My own conviction is that the resources of the soil have not been developed to anything approaching full capacity. Probably, if the



ANGUS MACKAY.

Supt. Indian Head Experimental Farm.

necessity required it, double the food supply of the world could be produced in the course of a very few years.

Looking to the next century, I can only say that, having regard to the wonderful inventive genius of the human race, I have no reason to doubt that as population and wealth develop, agriculture will develop with it; that the food supply will be steadily increased, and I see no indications whatever that there will be lack of sufficient food to eat during the twentieth century. There may be places in which the failure of crops in any particular year might lead to suffering, as recently in India; but, if the matter be looked into closely, it would be found, I think, that where these periods of famine come they result from lack of diligent forethought and industrious preparation. In North America there is no likelihood of a famine, because the people are sufficiently prudent to keep a little in advance of immediate necessities.

I do not think that the capacity of North America to produce wheat has reached anything approaching the limit. The Dominion of Canada could probably multiply its output of wheat by five in the course of the next twenty or thirty years if the emergency arose. The fact that wheat is low is the best proof that there is no immediate danger of scarcity, and what is true of wheat is equally true of other commodities. Canada does not produce one barrel of apples to-day where she could, if the emergency required it, produce fifty.

It is probable, however, that the pressure of population will ultimately permanently enhance the position of the agriculturist. The first consideration of the human race, as a means of existence, is to eat; and, as population grows greater, the responsibility will be greater upon those who are called upon to provide the food by which the hundreds of millions of people exist; and, therefore, if I were going to venture upon a prediction concerning the 20th century, it would be that the farmer would steadily advance to a more advantageous and commanding position in the world, and that no profession or calling offers greater inducements for security and happiness.

J. W. LONGLEY, Attorney General.
Halifax, N. S.

IMPLEMENTS AND THE "HEATHEN CHINEE."

Your questions brought to my mind a little incident that occurred a few weeks since. I had met an old friend who was noted for having a somewhat speculative philosophy of his own. We were talking of the unseasonable season of 1900, when he asked me, "Did you ever observe that the ends of centuries have often been marked by strange freaks of nature?" I replied I had seen the end of so few centuries I hardly liked to offer my experience as evidence, and I felt like giving you the same answer, but your questions set me to thinking and comparing the farming of to-day with the farming of my early recollection, and only for the name I would hardly recognize them for the same occupation, and following along that line brought me to your first question, what has contributed most largely to this change, or "What has been the greatest achievement of the last century with regard to agriculture?" My boyhood was spent

in a new part of Ontario, and when I look back and compare the farming implements of that time with those of to-day, I feel no hesitation in saying the improvement in farming implements has been the greatest achievement of the century in regard to agriculture. A good deal less than half a century ago there were very few men who had seen a machine for *even cutting grass or grain*. In those days a farmer considered his harvest practically finished when it was cut and bound ready for stooking; to-day the real work of harvesting begins there. I remember very well the first time I saw a mowing machine at work. I drove a good many miles to see it, so did hundreds of others. It was near the City of London, and I remember, as well as though it were yesterday, seeing Mr. Robson drive up with the mowing part of a combined McCormick machine. He had three big horses to haul it, and a small shanty on each end of the cutting-bar to clear the track and keep the cut grass from clogging the machine, and he made the fur fly, also the grass. But if our Manitoba boys were to meet that machine near town they might perhaps mistake it for a windmill out for a lark, but they would never suspect it was a mowing machine. A few years earlier there were lots of men who had never seen a horse-rake, and did not believe such a thing could be made or was needed—the hand rake was good enough. What would the boys think now of going out to rake up a field of hay with a twenty-inch rake?

Your second question I will answer by asking one or two more. Is there a man living who can forecast the future of "Civilized Asia" for a quarter of a century? Will it be a customer, or a competitor, for our food stuffs? Will it be a repetition of India: breaking down our markets for a year or two, and then asking us to feed them until they can do it again? I suppose nine men out of every ten could answer these questions! I am the tenth, but if you will jog my memory at the end of the next century I can probably give a more intelligent answer. But to go back to the question of civilizing the "Heathen Chinese." How is it to be done? We have tried opium, and missionary, and gunpowder, with indifferent success. It is true he took kindly to the opium, but being only a "Heathen Chinese," he could never be taught to assimilate the missionary or make the most of him as his Island neighbors did. The gunpowder treatment is still on trial, and if by a free and judicious use of it we can persuade every man, woman and child (for the sake of peace) to eat two bushels of Western wheat and fifty pounds of Western meat each year, they might in time learn to appreciate our missionaries and incidentally furnish us the means of keeping up the supply. Truly, "Peace has its victories as well as war." That is a fine sentiment to close with, and wishing you and your readers prosperity and happiness, and all the compliments of the season, I am,

WILLIAM LYNCH.

Westbourne, Man.

The Master's Poor.

He frowned and shook his snowy head,
"Those clanging bells! they deafen quite
With their unmeaning song," he said,
"I'm weary of it all to-night—
The festive air of Christmastide—
The merriment of passer-by—
The sentiment on every side—
The empty wishes which they cry

"The gladness—sadness—I'm so old
I have no sympathy to spare,
My heart has grown so very cold
And hard, I do not seem to care
How many laugh, or long, or grieve,
In all the world this Christmas Eve.

"There was a time, long, long ago
They take our best, the passing years—
Ah me! for the old life and glow
I'd give—what's on my cheek?—not tears!
I have a whim—to-night I'll spend
Till eyes turn on me gratefully.
An old man's whim, just to pretend
That he is what he used to be.

"Religion seems an empty sound,
No comfort do I find in creed,
But maybe, as I go around
And minister to those in need,
The Christ who in the manger lay,
Will meet me somewhere on the way.

"An old man's whim!" he muttered oft,
And cast his wealth on every hand,
But strangely warm, and strangely soft,
His old face grew, for self and pride
Slipped from him in the tender glow
That kindled at the thanks, the prayer.
He looked into his heart and lo!
The old-time faith and joy were there!

The law of love is sweet and plain
Who, helpful enters at the door
Of poverty, and want, and pain,
Will find the Master with His poor.
"Ring out, old bells!—right gladly ring!"
He cried, "for grand the song you sing."

Xmas, 1900.

JEAN BLEWETT.

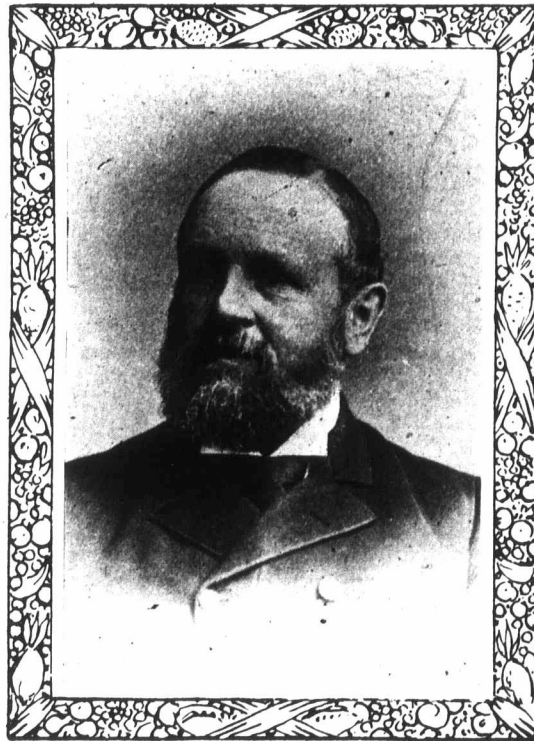
The Charm of Christmas Time.

BY WASHINGTON IRVING.

There is something in the very season of the year that gives a charm to the festivity of Christmas. At other times we derive a great portion of our pleasures from the mere beauties of nature. Our feelings sally forth and dissipate themselves over the sunny landscape, and we "live abroad and everywhere." The song of the bird, the murmur of the stream, the breathing fragrance of spring, the soft voluptuousness of summer, the golden pomp of autumn—earth with its mantle of refreshing green, and heaven with its deep, delicious blue, and its cloudy magnificence—all fill us with mute but exquisite delight, and we revel in the luxury of mere sensation. But in the depth of winter, when nature lies despoiled of every charm, and wrapped in her shroud of sheeted snow, we turn for our gratifications to moral sources. The dreariness and desolation of the landscape, the short gloomy days and darksome nights, while they circumscribe our wanderings, shut in our feelings also from rambling abroad, and make us more keenly disposed for the pleasure of the social circle. Our thoughts are more concentrated—our friendly sympathies more aroused. We feel more sensibly the charm of each other's society, and are brought more closely together by dependence on each other for enjoyment. Heart calleth unto heart; and we draw our pleasures from the deep wells of loving kindness which lie in the quiet recesses of our bosoms, and which, when resorted to, furnish forth the pure element of domestic felicity.

The pitchy gloom without makes the heart dilate on entering the room, filled with the glow and warmth of the evening fire. The ruddy blaze diffuses an artificial summer and sunshine through the room, and lights up each countenance in a kindlier welcome. Where does the honest face of hospitality expand into a broader and more cordial smile—where is the shy glance of love more sweetly eloquent—than by the winter fireside! And as the hollow blast of wintry wind rushes through the hall, claps the distant door, whistles about the casement, and rumbles down the chimney, what can be more grateful than that feeling of sober and sheltered security with which we look around on the comfortable chamber and the scene of domestic hilarity.

The English, from the great prevalence of rural habit throughout every class of society, have always been fond of those festivals and holidays which agreeably interrupt the stillness of country life; and they were, in former days, particularly observant of the religious and social rites of Christmas. It is inspiring to read even the dry details which some of the antiquaries have given of the quaint humors, the burlesque pageants, the complete abandonment to mirth and good-fellowship, with which this festival was celebrated. It seemed to throw open every door and unlock every heart. It brought the peasant and the peer together, and blended all ranks in one warm, generous flow of joy and kindness. The old halls of castles and manor-houses resounded with the harp and the



HON. SENATOR FERGUSON, P. E. I.

Christmas carol, and their ample boards groaned under the weight of hospitality. Even the poorest cottage welcomed the festive season with green decorations of bay and holly; the cheerful fire glanced its rays through the lattice, inviting the passengers to raise the latch and join the gossip-knot huddled around the hearth, beguiling the long evening with legendary jokes and oft-told Christmas tales.