

zero out of doors and well down towards that point in the scale inside the house at times, is no entrancing task.

Then the half frozen firelighter bolts back perforce to bed till the temperature rises some 50 or 60 degrees. Everything is of course as in the glacial period. There is not even water to be had. Blocks of ice have to be melted to obtain it, and everything else in the house is naturally "frozen solid." But these blazing wood stoves work wonders, and after a time life seems to flow on, much as elsewhere.

"COUNTRY FOOD."

One is first surprised at this term, which is constantly used, visions of butter and eggs and fresh milk rise to the mind grown some what weary of dried meat diet.

At Churchill this simply means in summer fish in winter white partridge or ptarmigan.

Deer has ceased to abound within reach of that fort so venison is a rare thing. For vegetables, some small turnips are about the only garden produce of the soil—a bushel or two means a great deal of hard labour—and they are liable to freeze and spoil before the winter is far spent.

Potatoes can be grown, as large as marbles, but are quite unsatisfactory, from either producers' or consumers' standpoint.

For the rest imported provisions have to be entirely depended on—and it is wonderful what an attractive and varied "menue" the mission kitchen furnishes.

But such a diet in course of years is bound to tell an any constitution—harmfully. And nature revolts and desires like Nebuchadnezzar to go into the field and "eat grass"—from utter lack of vegetable food.

This "country food" frequently runs short, the partridge don't come, or the fish are not caught, and people are reduced to the old and somewhat musty store provisions of yellowish pickled beef and sickly pork, preserved (who knows how long) in brine.

Everybody at the fort is "rationed" at all times, and it makes one feel in a nervous state of seige when they talk of the chances of the flour running short, or of the brine having leaked from the barrels and left the pork and beef a little more pale and sickly in colour and flavour than before.

And this is a chief topic of conversation for lack of others. The price of various staples is another fundamental topic.

"If I were to get them at P—for so much, and the freight was

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