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The old notion that the bird of dawn sings all night long on Christmas eve, dispelling by his sonorous watchfulness all kinds of evil spirits, so that not one of them may stir abroad to assail with unseen weapons the children of men is surely not without significance. Whether or not we believe in witch or fairy, or striking planet, we know that there are powers of darkness that lie in wait to catch souls and do them mischief. These malicious forces, loving guile and plotting wrong, make their ambush most commonly in the hearts of men and women and yet they are enemies of the human race. We know that Christmas is their declared antagonist and so much do they dread his advent that for fear's or shame's sake they put on disguise when they discern his approach if they cannot get out of the way of his rebuking presence. Where he reigns, there is a lull in the clamour of bad passions that make discord in the world. Envy and hatred and all uncharitableness flee at the sound of his footsteps; the voice of contention is hushed and words of anger are no longer heard. Gentle and tender thoughts visit the mind and what the tongue utters is gracious and kindly. Softening memories of long vanished scenes and forms awake with the hallowed dawn and a desire to make others happy, if but for a day or even an hour, makes itself felt. The little ones, the poor, the sick and the distressed are gainers by these diffused influences. Those who are blessed with wealth and health and freedom from care have a richer benison by (as far as possible) sharing their boons with others. Such is the far-reaching sway of Christmas-tide that it hallows the closing and gladdens the coming year by the efficacy of its name, and the memories, wishes, prayers and hopes therewith associated.

Word has come that the *modus vivendi* between France and England, touching Newfoundland, has been prolonged on the definite understanding that the British Government shall, during its continuance, settle the difficulty with or without the consent of the Newfoundland Legislature. A scheme, which originated with the council of St. Pierre and Miquelon has also been submitted by M. Ribot. It is not at all likely to win favour in England, unless the Government desires to alienate Newfoundland irremediably. This scheme proposes that Newfoundland should part with the peninsula of Burin, in lieu of the French shore! We can anticipate the comments of the island press on such an offer as that—an offer which the colony would never dream of accepting.

Since his return to England, Col. Fane, of Fulbeck Hall, Lincolnshire, of the agricultural delegates that visited Canada at the invitation of the Government, has given a generally favourable account of the North-West as a home for English emigrants. He was surprised and delighted at the extent and character of the cattle ranches, and spoke especially of the Hon. Mr. Cochrane's establishment in the McLeod district. Mr. Cochrane, he said, was well known in England as a raiser of shorthorns. What pleased him not

a little was to find so many prosperous farmers from his own county. Immigrants to Canada had undoubtedly to work hard, but, if they were industrious and saving, a competence assuredly awaited them. He thought, however, that for ranching considerable capital was necessary, as, except it were conducted on a large scale, it could hardly be expected to be remunerative. He had met a good many young Englishmen of the well-to-do, educated class who had come to Canada with little money and without the necessary previous training. Some of these succeeded through force of character, having made up their minds to battle with adverse circumstances till they conquered. Others had uphill work, though they did their best and did not grumble. Even those who were literally "roughing it" preferred the healthy life that they led, so largely in the open air, and its invigorating toil, to sedentary occupation in Europe. There was, indeed, a charm about the independence of North-West ranch life, with its pleasant excitement, which suited the youth of England. Col. Fane expressed a strong preference for the British provinces and territories, as contrasted with the Far West of the United States, with its wild disorder, its daily shootings and impunity for crime, save when resort was had to a tribunal which was itself lawless. Of the Canadian cattle trade he spoke favourably, and questioned the truth of the statement that the cattle lost in weight during the passage. He referred in enthusiastic terms to Canadian dairying, to our fruit-growing capabilities and to our excellent agricultural schools. Altogether, Col. Fane's report of his visit is most encouraging, and his practical suggestions are wise and timely. He had been in Canada years ago with his regiment, the 25th King's Own Borderers, and so was able to appreciate the remarkable progress of the last quarter century.

It appears that during the year 1889 1,279 three-pound bags of Ladoga wheat were distributed among the farmers of the Dominion for purposes of experiment. Up to the close of last January 142 reports had been received at the Central Farm as to the results of the tests made. Of these 117 were favourable and 25 unfavourable. The latter were mainly from Ontario and Quebec, where rust had been general in all varieties, but it appeared that the Ladoga had suffered more from that cause than some of the other sorts. The average yield from the 3 lbs. samples was 46 lbs. The largest yield reported up to the date above given was from Mr. M. Saunby, of Inderby, British Columbia, in whose case 139½ lbs. were harvested. The average weight per bushel of the grain produced was 60½ lbs.—the heaviest coming from Mr. Groat, of Edmonton, N.W.T., showing 64½ lbs. For early ripening the Ladoga continues to maintain its character—the average from the returns sent in giving it 9½ days advantage over the Red Fife. In the Maritime Provinces, where White Russian has been principally grown, the Ladoga was, on an average, 8 days in advance of that variety. The extracts from the more favourable reports showed a considerable diversity in the yield and its character. That this was due to local circumstances may be taken for granted, but the amount and quality of the harvest must also have depended, to some extent at least, on the care bestowed on the test. The prevalence of rust in older Canada just at the season when the test was made was unfortunate, but good yields obtained in both the Maritime and interior provinces show that even under such adverse circumstances vigilance and good management may prove an efficient counter-agent. The tests of frozen grain were especially beneficial to North-Western farmers as a warning against hazarding the use of injured seed. In no case is it serviceable to put inferior grain, whether it be damaged or naturally so, into the ground, and this Canadian farmers are learning and taking to heart.

The introduction into Canada of Dr. Koch's remedy for tuberculosis (the first trial of its efficacy having been made last week in Montreal at the General Hospital) marks an important stage in the history of medicine in the Dominion. Canada has long

taken a high rank in medicine and surgery, and McGill College may, without invidious preference, be pronounced well worthy of the distinction of initiating the application of this great discovery in Canada. It would not be proper to single out the names of the living for honorable mention, but it may suffice to say that an institution which comprised in its list of pioneers such names as Sir Duncan Gibb, Dr. Andrew Holmes, Dr. George Campbell and Dr. R. P. Howard has no reason to be ashamed of the pupils and successors of those eminent men. Not a few of the later generation have enlarged the knowledge and experience of their admirable home training by subsequent courses in the great medical schools of Europe. Those of Germany have had attractions for several of them, and thither a volunteer delegation has just gone to sit patiently at the feet of the Gamaliel whose discovery will, it is hoped not without reason, prove one of the grandest boons that science has yet conferred on suffering humanity. The first country beyond the limits of the German Empire to share in the benefits of the new cure was our own motherland, Dr. Koch having, early in November, placed a small quantity of his wondrous fluid at the disposal of Mr. Watson Cheyne, Surgeon to King's College Hospital, and Dr. G. A. Heron, Physician to the Victoria Park Hospital for Consumption. A demonstration of the efficacy of the remedy was given in due time, but the quantity of lymph available was extremely small, and British physicians, who are proverbially cautious in adopting novelties, hesitated to pronounce a judgment till they had more ample data to base it on. Subsequent trials were, however, considered favourable to the new cure. In respect of the results to be expected in cases of lupus, Dr. Koch himself said that the affected spots swelled after injection and that, serous exudation ensuing, the watery matter dried upon the turgid skin and then the spots healed, shrank and disappeared. It is the tissue, not the tubercle bacillus that the lymph acts upon—this diseased tissue being in some cases absorbed, in others cast out by suppuration. On the liberation of the bacilli by this last process they may invade healthy parts, and as a safeguard against injurious results, the needle syringe must be used again till all trace of morbid action has disappeared. On the issue of the tests inaugurated in this city much depends.

According to a series of experiments conducted in France by scientific agriculturists, it has been ascertained that there is no essential difference between spring wheats and fall wheats. All wheats, says the *Dictionnaire d'Agriculture*, are sown in spring or autumn, according to the country. They all pass in time from the one state to the other, and only need to be gradually accustomed to the change by sowing the fall wheat a little later or the spring wheat a little earlier, from year to year. Of the great number of varieties, some feel the cold more than others, and these it has become usual to sow in the spring. The cultivation of wheat goes back to a time of which written history has kept no record. Monuments that antedate the Hebrew scriptures, show that it was familiar to the Egyptians long before the period of the Exodus. A small-grained wheat has been found among the remains of the earliest Swiss lake-dwellings, which have been assigned a date as remote as that of the Trojan war. The lake-dwellings of pre-historic Lombardy have yielded a different variety of wheat, while wheat of an intermediate kind was found among the ruins of the Stone age in Hungary. Passing to the farthest continental East, we find that the Chinese had a knowledge of the precious grain twenty-seven centuries before Christ. The great antiquity assigned to wheat in the temperate parts of Europe, Asia and Africa by monuments and written records is confirmed by the names that have been given to it in the oldest known languages. It is not believed, however, that it was widely diffused in a wild state before its culture began. Of all the testimony as to its natural growth between the extreme west and the extreme east of the old world, De Condolle is inclined to accept only that which assigns as its habitats Mesopotamia and the banks