

in prices. When France owned Canada, a good deal of wheat was grown in the parishes below Quebec, where the staples now are hay and potatoes. In 1830 the largest flour mill in the United States was at Oswego, the next two at Richmond, Va., the fourth in New York city, and the capacity of the largest was only 300,000 barrels a year; whereas Minneapolis and Duluth, then mere villages, now manufacture that much in a week. The older provinces of Canada, like the older States, are abandoning wheat and taking to dairying, stock-raising and fruit-growing. The same metamorphosis is going on in the United Kingdom. In France "the cultivation of wheat and other cereals tends to increase rather than decrease," says the British Foreign Office, "yet such is the decline in prices that growers are practically at their wit's end." The French, like the rest of us, will get tired of growing wheat without a profit. In Norway and Sweden, Denmark, Germany and other parts of Europe dairying is coming to the front as wheat ceases to pay. Dairying has already become an important industry in Australia. New Zealand butter is conveyed to London, a distance of 12,000 miles, for less than a penny per pound. In Northern Africa, from which the Romans used to draw food, France and Italy are beginning wheat culture as well as the culture of barley, beans, Indian corn and cattle. Algiers and Tunis, the French colonies, sent 140,000 cattle to France last year, and "broke" the market. Under the present French tariff colonial products are admitted free. The beet-root growers of France are having a hard time of it owing to the decline in the price of beet sugar. "It is melancholy to think," says the British Foreign Office report, "that France has spent 500,000,000 francs in bounties in ten years for the protection of the sugar trade, and that growers and manufacturers alike still find that they are on the verge of penury;" adding that in some localities dairying is superseding the beet.

A European conflagration may occur at any time; the vast armaments which are crushing the people seem to render that inevitable, to say nothing of the decrepid condition of Turkey. War would

of course send prices up with a bound, but when it had ceased the struggle for the survival of the cheapest would doubtless begin with increased vigor. There is no reason for supposing that the resources of science have been exhausted, or that the immense areas of the earth still remaining waste cannot be subjugated. Omitting war from the reckoning, it is tolerably safe to say indeed that the era of cheap food has only just begun, and that ten years hence prices are likely to be lower than they are now. The wheat-grower has already felt the pinch, and the next to feel it will probably be the dairy farmer. The Australian delegates to the Intercolonial conference at Ottawa spoke of selling Australian mutton in Canada at two cents per pound.

It is rather a cheerless prospect for Canadian and American farmers, but the best way out of the difficulty is for them to undertake scientifically that which pays best. Dairying and stock-raising have thus far enabled the farmers of Ontario to keep their heads above water, and one has only to read the debates at the farmers' institutes to see that they are bent on increasing their knowledge and skill. Pasteur saved the wine and silk-worm industries of France from fatal pests by means of the microscope, and throughout Europe all the talk now is of agricultural colleges, travelling dairies, cheaper transportation rates by electric lines and horseless vehicles, lectures on manuring, chemistry and so on, to save the farmer from the merciless competition with which he is threatened. The farmers of Canada are awake to the situation, but they cannot be too much awake. In this department of MASSEY'S MAGAZINE we propose to discuss the economic side of agriculture in all its bearings, and shall be glad to have the co-operation of practical farmers. Party politics will be eschewed, and we cannot afford space to the exposition of cure-alls that have been discredited by the experience of men. With these limitations, an effort will be made with the help of kind friends outside to promote interest in the higher questions affecting the farmer—to produce a little light without, we hope, engendering unnecessary controversial heat.