

The Farming World

For Farmers and Stockmen

Vol. XVIII

DECEMBER 25th, 1900.

No. 17

A Happy New Year

The Closing Century—Our Hope in the New



HAPPY new century might be a more appropriate greeting at this juncture, when we are just on the threshold of another hundred years of the world's history. The world's history dates a long time back; but not so with that of Canada. Three or four centuries are sufficient to take one back to the very beginning of the little settlement of early pioneers who first laid the foundations of this great Dominion. Even one hundred years ago Canada, as then known, formed a very small portion of the great territory stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the great lakes to the regions of perpetual snow which it now occupies.

Truly marvellous changes have taken place even in connection with our own beloved Dominion, Fair Canada, the Land of the Maple, since 1800. What had we in the way of free institutions, government by the people, and freedom in the management of our own internal affairs? Practically nothing. We were governed directly from Old London by individuals who knew nothing of our land, of its people, and of their needs, and who farmed this colony, so to speak, in the interest of their own pockets and those of their satellites. In fact the century just closing had nearly run half its course before our rights in respect to making and administering our own laws were obtained. A century ago the Dominion of Canada was not known as such. What is now the glorious confederation of which we are so justly proud consisted of a few thinly-populated districts down by the sea, and two inland provinces separated from each other by diversity of race, religion and laws. The century has brought solidity, oneness of purpose, similar laws and similar institutions out of all this chaos, and given us the great Dominion of Canada; a nation within a nation that is without a peer to-day in the extent of her undeveloped mineral and agricultural wealth and her timber resources. Truly Canada enters upon the new century under the most favorable auspices, and those of us who are privileged to look over the period between now and twenty five years hence will see marvellous development along many lines.

But to return to the retrospective again. What great progress has been wrought in Canadian agriculture during the closing century! One hundred

years ago there was, practically speaking, no agriculture in Canada to amount to anything. In fact, there were grave doubts in the minds of many eminent men at that time as to whether agriculture as we understand it to-day could be carried on at all or not. The fisheries and lumbering were then the mainstays of the population. But how marked the change! To-day agriculture is recognized as the great industry of the country, and the one from which our people derive the greatest amount of wealth. Canada is to-day essentially an agricultural country, and our people realize as never before that from this source must come the wealth, the energy, and the brains that are to bring about the development which every loyal citizen is predicting for this land in the early years of the new century.

We might enlarge on many phases of this question with interest and profit to all, but space forbids. A reference to some of the essential features in our agricultural progress during the century may be worth while. Canadian agriculture one hundred years ago was very primitive in its character. It was the time of the sickle and the flail. These conditions existed till nearly half the century had gone by to be followed by the cradle, later the reaper, and in these modern times the self-binder, the automobile mower, etc. In fact real progress in our agriculture and methods of work may be said to be confined to the last half of the century, and most of it to the last twenty-five years. Our agriculture has developed from what may be termed the mere tilling of the soil and harvesting the grain into the varied and special features we have to-day, such as dairying, which brings into this country annually over twenty millions of dollars, and live stock as seen in the magnificent display at the Midwinter Fair a week or two ago. Other special features are now coming to the front, such as poultry, the bacon trade, fruit culture, so that the Canadian farmer enters upon the new century with more strings to his bow, so to speak, than he has ever had in the history of this country.

And then what wonderful development the century has wrought in the way of agricultural education, agricultural legislation and the social side of farm life. Development in these regards is just opening up to us, and twenty-five years hence we will wonder how we ever managed to get along in 1900 when knowing so little of the fundamental and underlying principles of soil cultivation, the growth of plants and the feeding and rearing of farm animals. Just as we marvel to-day how our forefathers managed in the early days of the closing century, so our children and grand-