

PART ONE.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION.

The chief aim before this country should be to increase its production in all ways, to which it is constrained by the ever-increasing debt due to its natural growth. Agricultural production may best be attained in the three prairie provinces where land is as easy of tillage as can possibly be anywhere. Their staple product—wheat, in unlimited quantity, like gold, is readily saleable abroad at market prices according to the world supply, unlike less staple products that are subject to local fluctuating demand and price.

Distance from the seaboard absorbs a large proportion of the selling price of wheat, a drawback that can be remedied only by growing it in large fields not far from railways, with the most scientific labor-saving methods: the greater the quantity grown the lower should become its cost and the cost per bushel of transport to the seaboard. Still, the distance of the West from the seaboard places wheat-growing here at a disadvantage, while the necessarily heavy cost of transport is not lightened by the extension of railways throughout the country far in advance of any agricultural production, which causes high rates of freight and for the time being, over-capitalisation.

Conditions in Canada indicate an absolute necessity for greater agricultural production and an increase of exports, of wheat chiefly, that would restore and preserve to the country a sound economic equilibrium. From the national point of view mixed farming and the supply of the home-market with foodstuffs is of quite secondary importance; and the cultivation of small holdings of a few acres, market gardens, and the like, should be considered but as initiatory to the main business of the country—the growing of grain, for which the extensive level prairies are in general most suitable. Every such small holding and small farm should lead naturally by its success to a larger and then still larger