

So far I have only mentioned the country in its connection with stock-raising and the methods pursued with regard to that enterprise. I will now notice its agricultural resources. To the uninitiated who land in the country in the latter part of summer, when vegetation has become more or less dried up, the country would appear absolutely useless for agricultural purposes. The soil has a light sandy appearance in many places, but upon closer examination it will often be found rich in the mineral elements which are utilized in the growth of crops. While in British Columbia I have had to change my opinion previously formed in regard to soils. I have seen abundant crops of grain, grass and roots growing on land which, previous to my experience in this line in British Columbia, I would have pronounced a barren sand and incapable of producing a crop; and this with no fertilizer except being irrigated with an abundant supply of water. I may here add that it is my firm conviction that every acre of land in our Great North-West can be made to produce magnificent crops; but in order to accomplish this, those parts lying between Regina and the Rocky Mountains will have to be supplied with water with which to irrigate the soil when necessary. The practice of irrigating the soil in our country has not received the attention which it deserves. Although in Ontario, we have as a usual thing natural irrigation sufficient to produce a fairly good crop, yet there is scarcely a season when the same could not be increased about one-third if a certain amount of artificial irrigation could be managed. And then, every few years, there comes a dry season in which there is only about one-third of a crop, and this in localities where irrigation could be accomplished at a reasonable outlay, and would be readily undertaken were the practice properly understood. Irrigation, although not much understood in this part of Canada, was practised by the Egyptians, Arabians, Assyrians, Babylonians and Chinese. One valley in Arabia was watered from a vast reservoir made by a dam two miles long and one hundred and twenty feet high, built of enormous blocks of hewn stone, and which stood and restrained the current of a large stream, having seventy tributaries, for some two thousand years. France, Spain and Italy pay great attention to irrigation. The Romans during several centuries constructed expensive works which are still in use. In some parts of these countries all the water in the Lakes and rivers is claimed by the Government, and the people are charged a rental for the water, according to the quantity required during the season, the Government constructing