

CHAPTER IX.—AGRICULTURE

CONSPECTUS

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NOTE.—The interpretation of the symbols used in the tables throughout the Year Book will be found facing p. 1 of this volume.

Agriculture in Canada, though no longer supreme among the primary industries, is of major importance to the economy of the country as a whole and is still basic to many areas. The area of occupied farmland of 271,756 sq. miles (1956) amounts to only 11.6 p.c. of the total area of the provinces and has shown little increase during the past two decades, but cultivation in this static area has become greatly intensified, producing most of the food products required by a rapidly increasing population and providing surpluses of wheat and other grains, wheat flour, livestock, fruits and vegetables and of many prepared and manufactured agricultural products for world markets. The agricultural economy has been undergoing continual change ever since the pioneer farmer first began to produce more than his requirements and to desire products other than those produced on his own land, but that change has now become extremely marked. The evolution in farming practice under the impact of technological and scientific advances, its commercialization and the development of its greater interdependence on other branches of the economy are outlined in the following special article. Other articles that have appeared in previous Year Books dealing with the historical development of agriculture and with significant features of that progress are listed in Chapter XXVII under the heading "Special Material Published in Former Editions of the Year Book".

THE REVOLUTION IN CANADIAN AGRICULTURE*

Twenty years ago a worker in Canadian agriculture supplied, on the average, enough food for himself and nine other persons. Now he produces enough for himself and twenty-two other persons. This typifies what has commonly become known as the "agricultural revolution". So rapidly is the farming industry changing that in the future it may be possible to look back and find that agriculture was transformed as radically by this revolution as the industrial world was transformed by the industrial revolution of the late eighteenth century.

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