Feb 4th/97

Barkerville
Cariboo
B. C.

Dear father

I was not aware of your birthday being so near, till reminded by your letter which I received last mail. I hardly think this will reach you in time to greet you on your birthday; but I wish you many more happy returns of the day. We cannot get anything up here, scarcely, that would be suitable for presents, or I would send a little present of some kind.

You may be sure, both our Jim and myself would be only too glad to be home to celebrate your 70th birthday or for the Christmas gathering. As I am situated at present, I could manage it easy enough, for that matter I could come every winter.

I am glad you had Uncle John to the Christmas dinner, and hope he is in

man I was wanting to get for a partner; but I surely intend to try prospecting for two or three months, anyway. The doctor and board got to know that I was thinking about leaving to go prospecting. One of the boardmen and his wife were urging me not to think of it, and the doctor strongly advises me to get leave of absence, and so keep my place. The doctor is keen on mining too. He and I are getting a book on mining.

We've just had another spell of cold weather, one Chinaman was frozen to death and two others had their hands and feet badly frozen. A man was brought into the hospital a little more than a week ago, with his hands frozen, and would have lost all his fingers, but he contracted pneumonia, too, and died three days after, he was buried from the hospital last Sunday.

I get the "Observer" from you regularly every week, and occasionaly "Wednesday Time" from our Will. Thank you very much.

I am glad you like the Montreal paper.

better circumstances than when I left home. If he is in need I would gladly send him some thing. I often think about him and wonder how he and Aunt Anne are faring. You must let me know, next time you write. Our Annie would be ~~so~~ badly missed, I think but, I am glad to hear of little Dorothy doing so well. How is our Albert and his girl getting on? Is there any signs of the wedding coming off soon?

My Christmas was not a very jolly one. We had lots of good things to eat, several of the ladies sent us cakes, fruit, pies, candies jellies and wine and chickens; but I was kept busy all the time looking after the old men. I made a big Christmas pudding, which I think about the best I ever ate, everybody else said that, too. We had the doctor, the registrar & constable, besides the patient, to dinner. I got a little praise in the paper, in connection with the spread. I am not sure yet, whether I shall go to Peace River or not, as I have not heard from the

There is every indication that the mines and every other business will be in a prosperous condition this season. There has been several quartz claims working all winter, and many others are expected to open up in spring. The Gold-field Co. will find work for a good many, while Laurie claim at Willow River is expected to strike big pay in about two months, when they will find work for 150 or 200 men. Big Valley, Waverley, and many others have been working all winter, something unusual. The Golden River Quesnelle Co. have found work for all comers during the winter. They are building a huge dam to turn the course of the river, to enable them to clean up the gold from the present river-bed. I wonder that our Jim or Tommie did not try for a job there, they dont seem to have been doing anything for the last two months.

Those washers I sent are Chinese coins and the pipe is made from slate by some of the Indians. They were on the table when I was making up the watches, so I took a notion and put them in.

The Chinese New Year commenced on the 1st Feb. Chinatown is now celebrating, and