

## OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE CONDITION OF THE CROPS IN THE UNITED STATES.

**THE** following is from the Department of Agriculture:—Wheat—An increase of the average is observed, in a greater or less degree, in nearly every State. The Eastern States show no increase of fall sowing, except four per cent in Vermont, but the enlarged area of spring crops, which are the main home reliance for bread supplies, is very marked in Maine and Vermont; the former showing an advance of 28 per cent, the latter of 16 per cent. New York indicates 6 per cent increase in the fall average with no change in spring wheat. In Delaware a reduction of 7 per cent appears, while an increase of 9 per cent is shown in Maryland, 11 in Virginia, 17 in North Carolina and South Carolina, 11 in Georgia, 10 in Alabama, 68 in Mississippi, 81 in Arkansas, 40 in Tennessee and 80 in West Virginia. The increased acreage in the West where the great bulk of the wheat crop of the country is grown, is of peculiar significance of the State in which winter wheat is mostly cultivated. Ohio presents an increase of five per cent of that variety; Indiana, ten per cent; and Michigan seventeen per cent. In portions of these States, an unusual effort has been made to enlarge the area by spring sowing, showing respectively 11, 14, and 6 per cent increase in the States which rely mainly upon spring-sown crops. Illinois indicates an increase in that variety of 12 per cent; Wisconsin, 4 per cent; Minnesota, 23 per cent; Iowa, 12 per cent.

An analysis of these averages will show a general average of about 11 per cent increase in the fall sowing, and 28 per cent in the breadth of spring wheat, altogether an increase of 18 to 20 per cent in the aggregate number of acres in wheat. The reports of the condition for June are generally very favorable. A promise of the best crop ever known is held out by local correspondents in many places, particularly west of the Mississippi. Winter grain on new land is looking very well; but there is a large proportion of wheat sown on old worn-out land, poorly managed, and a very light crop will be the result. Barley—Kentucky, Missouri, and Minnesota have given increased attention to barley, but most of the other States are either slightly below the average or barely up to it. The fall sowing especially, was deficient in most of the Western States, but the deficiency was generally made up by extra exertions in preparing for a spring crop. Oats—An increased area in oats, averaging 7 per cent for the entire country is reported. Clover—It is worthy of note that every State in the Union reports an increased attention to the clover crop, with the single reduction of 2 per cent in New Hampshire, and the prospect for a good crop is almost universal. Kentucky only being marked a trifle below the average. Pastures—Delaware and Wisconsin are the only States failing to report increased averages. Fruits—The appearance of apple blossoms was unusually late on the Atlantic coast, opening very fully; at last they were injured in many places by storms and unpropitious weather. In the central portion of the West, the bloom of the orchards was not generally abundant. It was small on the Atlantic coast between New York and Georgia. With the single exception of apples west of the Mississippi it was large, and in some localities excessive.

## THE WEATHER AND CROPS IN BRITAIN.

**THE** *Mark Lane Express*, in review of the corn trade, says:—"New samples of wheat may appear in a month's time, and these always, after a high range of prices, are the signal for altered rates. The harvest is, indeed, begun in some parts of Southern Europe, and, if well gathered, would soon be available by steamers here. Thus all fear of famine is completely distanced for the present. It will, however, be unnecessary to expect a low range after such a universal exhaustion of stock."

Mr. Mechi, in a letter to the *Times*, says that many weeks of very warm and dry weather have so heated and cracked our cold, stiff, unctuous lands, that the over-rankness of the straw has been checked, and we have a fine upstanding crop with stout, well developed ears blooming abundantly, and promising a crop of wheat fine in quality and large in proportion to the straw, and quite in contrast to the laid and twisted crops of last year. In fact, it is a heavy land season, with the promise of a very early harvest, which is generally accompanied by an abundant wheat crop. Harvest will begin in this county (Essex) probably as early as the 16th of July. The heat and drought which have so benefited cold and wet soils, have acted unfavourably on light and shallow cultivated lands. Late-sown spring crops have suffered severely, and the hay crop will fall very short of that of last year. While the breadth of wheat is much greater than that of last year, barley is proportionally diminished.

Reports having been received of the fall of heavy rain during Sunday night, the 21st ult., at London, Leeds, Hull, Manchester, Cardiff, Southampton, Peterborough, Bristol, Brighton and Liverpool. Very heavy rain fell the whole of the same day in Dublin, Cork, Belfast, Waterford and Galway.

The *Scotsman* says:—"For several weeks, with the exception of one or two short but sharp showers last week, we have had no rain, and great have been the complaints of farmers in consequence. The days, generally speaking, have been warm, with rather chilling winds at night, which, together with the lack of moisture, have done much to check the growth of grass and to retard the progress of the cereal crops. Indeed, so far as pastures and hay are concerned, it is now very evident that the former will not afford such a good bite to stock, as in the early part of the season there was abundant promise that they would; in fact, so bare have the fields become generally, that grazing stock have recently fallen considerably in value. The artificial grasses, which in April looked so flourishing as to give indication of more than an ordinarily large

yield, have now, when in many places they are under the operation of the mowing machine and the scythe, proved to be short in length, and less thick on the ground than was expected. From all we can learn, the hay crop will not exceed, but will be under, the average of years. The cereal crops in most places, and particularly on cold and light soils, have been much checked, and many fields have assumed a yellowish tinge. Many, in the west especially, have been much destroyed by the grub, some enclosures presenting no other appearance than that of prepared red land. In various localities, turnips, owing to the drought, have never braided at all; in other places where they did appear above the drills, they have been much injured by fly, and the prospects of the crop at present do not look extremely bright. This is much to be regretted, as it seems very probable at present that straw will be short this year, which, of course, will be very detrimental to stock. Potatoes also are not coming away with the vigour which they would have done had the ground been more moist. Notwithstanding that the rain which fell on the 16th was so brief in its duration, it was yet so heavy as to lay the advanced wheat crops on some farms very materially, which is unfortunate; but with a fresh breeze they are not yet so far advanced as to preclude the possibility of their rising again. A thunderstorm, which, judging from the sultriness of the atmosphere, had been brewing for some days, broke over Edinburgh on the evening of the 20th. It lasted less than an hour, but within that time there were some rattling peals of thunder and several vivid flashes of lightning, accompanied with a very heavy shower. About midnight of the same day another heavy fall of rain commenced, which lasted only a short time; but this dense shower was succeeded by a gentler rain, which fell for about two hours. A few fields in the neighbourhood have been laid by the first shower, but not to any injurious extent. The rain was not sufficient to penetrate the ground to any depth, the mould in such gardens as are not shaded being perfectly dry in the morning. On Sunday, about two o'clock, the clouds, which had been gathering most of the morning, were burst open by flashes of lightning, followed by thunder and a few drops of rain, the little wind at that time being apparently from the south-west. The darkness soon passed away, however, when the wind veered round to a slightly north-eastern direction, and about half-past three o'clock thunder-peals were again heard, and we had a smart shower of rain, which lasted about half an hour. After a short interval of sunshine, the storm broke out anew, and was attended by a genial rain, which lasted for a considerable time. There was a lull in the storm between seven and eight o'clock, but shortly after the latter hour the thunder-clouds burst again more fiercely, the lightning flashed more brightly, the peals sounded more nearly, and the rain fell in heavier torrents than before. The elemental war lasted for about an hour and a half. The country generally will be much benefited by the refreshing showers where the crops have not been laid, but it is so parched that we could do with more yet."

**GOLD.**—Encouraging accounts reach us every week of new gold discoveries in different parts of the Province. Early in the spring gold was discovered in the boulders overlying the soil in a section of country known as the Indian Path, a few miles from the town of Lunenburg. Prospecting licenses, covering several hundred acres, were taken out. Gold was found in large quantities in the boulders; but the prospectors were seeking for the lead from which these auriferous fragments have been broken, and last week Mr. Waddelow discovered it—a magnificent lead of seven feet in thickness, plentifully sprinkled throughout with the precious metal. No assay of this quartz has been made, nor is any necessary. Several large pieces of it brought to this place, showed plainly to the eye of the observer the proof that it is of immense value. Mr. Waddelow will probably realize a fortune for himself and those associated with him, from this discovery.—*Bridgewater Times*.

**THE OTTAWA CANAL.**—The following letter appears in the *London Times* of the 22nd of June:—

"40, Old Broad St., E.C., June 24, 1868.

SIR,—In a recent impression (12th inst.) you directed attention to the suggested opening of navigation from Lake Huron through French River, Lake Nipissing, the Matawan, and the Ottawa, to the St. Lawrence, which would reduce the distance between Chicago and Montreal from 1,348 to 930 miles.

"The improvement of the navigation between these places is a subject of great public importance, and will probably before long become a more prominent one. It involves the development of the vast resources of the 'Far West' of America, and the means by which its products are to be brought to our shores. Grain, which is much needed and therefore dear in Europe, is so cheap there that it is sometimes used, not as food, but as fuel. The explanation of this anomaly is very simple. The capabilities of production are almost unlimited, but the means of transport are altogether insufficient.

"The Huron and Ontario Canal would not only open direct communication in sea-going vessels of 1,000 to 1,200 tons burthen, between Chicago and Liverpool, but it would become the proper and natural road for an immense traffic in the products of the West to reach the United States, through the markets of New York and Pennsylvania by Oswego, and Boston by Ogdensburg. This canal may in fact be regarded as a great international requirement to meet the wants of many communities, and its construction appears to be a commercial necessity.

"Yours very respectfully,

"W. C. McKenna."

## THE WEST INDIA FRUIT TRADE.

(From the *New York Evening Post*.)

**THE** West India fruit trade of this port has increased so rapidly of late years that it has become an important branch of trade, and a large amount of capital is invested in it. No regular vessels are employed in the business, but in the height of the season many rough-looking craft are impressed into the service, including some fishing smacks. The season is now at its height for both pineapples and bananas, and immense quantities are unloaded at the foot of Burling Slip, where these luscious fruits are often piled two or three feet deep. As many as eight or ten vessels frequently discharge their cargoes of pineapples upon the dock at once. The pines, in fact, are too ripe, which is an unusual occurrence.

Pineapples for the New York market are principally supplied by the Windward Islands—Baracoa and Nassau. Cuba has no interest either in the pineapple or banana branch of trade. The pineapple season begins about the last of May, and continues until the middle or last of July. The banana season usually begins a month or six weeks earlier, and continues a month later in the New York market. The supply of pineapples this season will reach seventy or eighty cargoes, about one-half of which have arrived. The cargoes vary from two to six thousand dozen.

It is estimated that the banana trade will reach thirty or forty cargoes, most of which came from Baracoa. A few are received from Nassa, Cuba, Central America and Mexico. Texas begins to furnish a few, but as yet the number is small. The cargoes vary from three to six thousand bunches. They are shipped in the bunch, packed in bins, and sold to wholesale dealers by the bin. The bunches vary from seventy-five cents to four or five dollars.

Cocoanuts are in season from the first of April until the latter part of July. All banana vessels bring large numbers of cocoanuts. Those sold with the husks on bring seventy-five dollars a thousand, and those with the husks off one hundred and ten dollars.

Havana oranges are out of season. The oranges now seen in such profusion are of French, Italian and Sicilian growth. The Havanas begin to come in about the last of October or first of November, and are at their height during the holidays. The supply begins to wane by the first of February, when the Messina and French oranges begin to arrive. The Havana orange trade is said to employ over a million dollars capital.

## SALE OF A FAMOUS WINE ESTATE.

**THE** long-expected auction of the Chateau Lafitte domain has just taken place, at the Civil Tribunal of the Court of First Appeal of the Seine. *La Liberté* publishes some curious details of the history of the estates, interesting to those who appreciate the celebrated claret. It appears that, as early as 1395, the seigneurs of Lafitte were adepts in the art of vine-growing; and so well known were the admirable qualities of the grapes grown on their estate that they were commonly entitled the "Finoches des Vigies." During the latter part of the 18th century the Chateau was the property of the President de Segur, whence it passed into the hands of M. de Pichard, who having been guillotined during the revolution, the nation sold it to a Dutch company, who, in its turn, gave it up in 1803 to M. Vanderbergh. His son has lately died intestate, and the property consequently belongs to his sisters, Mesdames de Villoutreys and Cornudet, and to his niece, Countess Duchatel, only daughter of a third sister. The estate consists of about 135 hectares, or about 328 English acres, while the adjoining manor of Carcucides contains about 10 hectares. The personnel of the Chateau usually numbers 20 servants, but during the vintage that number is increased by about 200 laborers and persons required for making of the wine. The annual expenses of the vineyards are estimated at £4000 sterling. The production averages from 130 to 140 pipes, or 126,000 litres, two gallons and a quarter English being equal to ten litres. To do justice to this precious wine, it must remain in wood for at least four years, and in bottle three years, by which time the original value of the wine will have doubled, if you reckon the expenses of bottling, the interest of the money, &c. 1855 was considered as one of the best vintages we have had for years. Six of the principal houses of Bordeaux purchased the wine at the rate of £224 per pipe. Each pipe of 1855 now sells at the rate of £320. A marsh separates the Chateau Lafitte estate from the well-known Sainte Estephe vineyard. The Chateau, built in the time of Louis XIII., stands on a wide terrace, which commands a splendid view over the Gironde, as well as the whole surrounding country. "La fite," in Gascon, signifies "The Height." The cellars of the castle contain a collection of the wines produced by the estate from the year 1797 to the present day.

**TEA.**—The report of the Assam Tea Company, recently issued, states that the estimated crop of tea for the year 1866 fell short by 147,815 lb., being in money value about £16,400, to which has to be added a further sum of £7,660, the average sale price of the tea not having been equal to that estimated; and these sums, together £24,060, have to be added to the amount of loss estimated in the last report. It was hoped that the results of 1867 would have been so far favourable as to reduce some of the previous loss, instead of which it is feared that there will be a further loss of about £16,000. Under these circumstances it will be impossible to declare any dividend. The estimates, however, for the current year, are of a more favorable character, and should they eventually be realized, the directors hope to be able to pay a small interim dividend in January next.