

Conditions in the West

By E. CORA HIND.

The West has been enjoying a week of bitterly cold weather, but this has not affected the attendance in Winnipeg of hundreds of farm men and women at the annual convention of Agricultural Societies, Home Economics, Bee Keepers and Horticulturists. The fact that the railway companies were obliged to refuse the one-fare rate which has prevailed for years, did not affect the conference either.

STANDARDIZATION.

James Lockie Wilson, Superintendent of Agricultural Societies and Fairs for Ontario, in one of his addresses strongly urged that the present Union Government be importuned to standardize all agricultural implements so that the various breakable parts would be interchangeable. An enormous amount of time is lost and lost at critical periods by the delay in having to send for parts when possibly, there is an ample supply of similar parts of another machine available. Mr. Wilson pointed out that the Union Government was the only government that could possibly deal successfully with a matter of this kind. His audience was in very full sympathy with him and the government will be approached along these lines, as a strong resolution was passed at a subsequent meeting.

POTATO CONFERENCE.

The Canadian West had its first potato conference during the week and an advisory council has been appointed similar to the one in Ontario, with a view to ultimate organization along the lines of the American association. Professor Macoun, Ottawa, is on this advisory council, and one of the first things attempted will be to endeavor to classify the potatoes already grown and to encourage community production of one variety in order that carload lots for seed may be available for shipment to Ontario and to the United States; there being a keen demand for a good northern seed. The drawback in

the past has been that Manitoba potatoes were so mixed that they were not suitable for this trade.

FARM LABOR.

The question of farm labor came up at all of the various meetings, and while there is an increased feeling of confidence that the government is doing everything possible to grapple with this situation, more definite information as to just what lines will be followed would be extremely welcome. There is no doubt that the feeling of "getting together," co-operation and community work is steadily on the increase.

GRAIN MARKETS.

The grain markets are in very much of a rut, though the rut is mainly along the lines of steadily advancing prices for coarse grains. The average price for May oats, for example, for the month of December was 82½c; in January it was 85½c; during the first two weeks of February the lowest price was 86c on the first day of the month, and now the price has reached 95c with every indication of going still higher. Privileges were eliminated to-day, but market went higher. Option trading may follow.

The forward movement of grain is very small, falling considerably below the receipts for the corresponding days of last year. While the weather has been cold, there has been no weight of snow to prevent hauling to the interior elevators and the supply of cars available should add to the general speeding up of transportation, such as to do away with this excuse of small receipts. It is evident that the grain is not in the country.

The amount of grain inspected for the first five months of the crop year of 1917-18 was 120,581,650 bushels, oats 30,148,950, and barley 6,312,800. The stocks in interior elevators on February 18th were only 5,867,785 bushels wheat compared with 22,810,016 bushels in 1917. These figures tell their own story.

The African Ambition of Germany

General Smuts has had exceptional opportunities to judge of the true character of German ambitions in Africa, and he has no hesitation in declaring, that under the thin disguise of colonization, Germany promoted aims that were purely military and whose ultimate object it was to secure strategic positions for the exercise of world power. As a matter of fact, there is a super-abundance of German testimony to the same effect. The African ambitions of Germany occupied an important place in the policy of her government in regard to Asia and Northern Europe. The Mittelafrica movement in Germany had, indeed, reached national dimensions even before the Mitteleuropa movement took definite shape. One pivotal point of the movement was that African colonies are the necessary bases of German "world-policy." Thus German colonies in Africa were to play a vital part in destroying the strategic unity of the British Empire and in completing the "freedom of the seas" according to the meaning placed on that phrase in Germany. A typical exponent of this policy is Herr Kolbe, who has already been quoted in these columns, and who anticipates the time when the whole coast of West Africa, from the mouth of the Cross River to the mouth of the Orange, will be in German hands. With pardonable exultation Herr Kolbe asks the world to recall what deeds were done by the Emden in the Indian Ocean and by the Karlsruhe in the Atlantic, without any naval base, without possibility of replenishing in port their supplies, ammunition and food, so that it may realize what the fortification of half the West Coast of Africa would mean for Germany and for England. Another influential writer on colonial questions, Herr Zimmerman, has declared that German Africa would make his country a world power by enabling it to exert decisive influence upon the world-political decisions of its enemies and of other nations; by exercising pressure on all developments of policy in Africa, Asia Minor and Southern Europe. Dr. Solf, the Secretary of State to the German Colonial Office, has demanded a solid colonial empire in Central Africa, to include the Cameroons, the Kongo, Portuguese West Africa, German Southwest and East Africa and portions of Portuguese East Africa and Rhodesia as the minimum of satisfaction of German ambitions in that part of the world.

But the German plan of world dominion necessarily

included a large slice of North Africa as well. It was, in fact, the contention of so competent an authority as Sir Henry Johnston, writing early in the present struggle, that the war was prepared for and provoked by Germany far more with the intention of getting Morocco as one of the results of victory than even the mediatizing of Belgium and the inclusion of the Low Countries within the Customs Union and armament of that Germanic Empire which, with Morocco as its pivot, was henceforth to dominate the Old World. It seemed as if German ambitions in regard to Morocco had come to an end with the patched-up settlement of 1911-12. It is certain that Germany was content at that time to let these ambitions fall into abeyance while she, in concert with Austria, proceeded to strengthen the Teutonic hold on the Balkan peninsula and Asia Minor. But the virility and war genius developed in Greece, Serbia, Montenegro and Bulgaria promised — at any rate on the part of Greece and Serbia—a stout opposition to any Austro-German advance toward Salonika and Constantinople. Apparently, therefore, Germany armed with greater diligence; and while resolving eventually to assert herself in the Balkans, determined to strike for world power in the first instance by the rapid annihilation of France during a presumed mood of British neutrality, and to wrest from France as the price of some crushing victory and the occupation of Paris the cession to Germany of Morocco in the first instance, and of as much more of French Africa and other oversea possessions as Great Britain might stomach without going to war.

That was Sir Henry Johnston's diagnosis of the situation, and it has a good deal of inherent probability. It is sufficiently plain that if Germany had got possession of Morocco she would have been able before long to bar the British sea route to the Mediterranean, Egypt and the Suez Canal, besides menacing most seriously the British sea route to the Cape of Good Hope, the West Indies and South America. Incidentally, she would have been able to veto any great expansion of the sea power of the United States. Subsidiary, it may be, but certainly not less vital to the German plan of empire, was the South African policy. The declared aim of that was to link up German colonies in West and in East Africa, and thus insulate the Cape and get into direct contact with the Transvaal, a serious obstacle to

the carrying out of this scheme was created by the development of Rhodesia into an autonomous state, thus separating German Southwest from German East Africa. But, on the other hand, the progress of Rhodesia and of the other British territories lying east of German Southwest Africa was seriously hampered, because no direct outlet to the sea could be secured by way of the German territory. Meanwhile, Germany did very little to warrant her claim to the possession of the very considerable part of South Africa — about a million square miles — which she had acquired. The German Government gave no evidence of knowing anything about the first principles of colonial development. Hence the German colonies produced little, not because they are naturally poor, but because they were new colonies and were exploited in the most blundering fashion by a government whose claim to efficiency in other departments of effort is universally recognized. A nation which desires to develop new colonies may choose between two methods, that of private enterprise or state action. The German Government adopted neither. It distrusted private enterprise because it feared that individuals might corner or squander the natural resources of the colony. Consequently, it did not throw them open to the business men of the world, and not even to German business men. The German passion for system was indulged with disastrous results. Regulations for every possible contingency were drafted; the land was measured, explored and described; colonial statistics and colonial law codes were promptly forthcoming. But if business men went to the colonies they found that before being able to trade with the natives, to build railways and roads, to prospect for gold or copper, to farm, to grow rubber or cotton, they had to apply for official permission, and most of them gave up the attempt in despair. The indictment against Germany as a colonizer is therefore as unanswerable as that against Germany as an undesirable and dangerous neighbor for any communities engaged in the work of peaceful development. General Smuts unquestionably voices the verdict of the free peoples of the world in condemning Germany to permanent exclusion from Africa. — New York Journal of Commerce.

DOMINION POWER.

The gross earnings of the Dominion Power & Transportation Company for the year ending 1917 amounted to \$2,967,273, while operating expenses totalled \$1,733,759. Net profits were \$726,219, which, added to the previous balance of \$536,065 made the total profit and loss surplus at the end of the past year \$1,262,284.

It was announced at the annual meeting that the company would continue the 7 per cent dividend on the preferred, and the 4 per cent dividend on the common stock. It was also stated that owing to the strong financial position of the company a bonus might be paid during the year.

When earnings fell off sharply in 1916, the company had to draw on previous surplus to meet all appropriations for the year. Those appropriations included \$58,292 for loss of two steamships, and \$34,202 for war taxes. In 1917 the company apparently provided for the war tax before showing profits, and the only appropriations other than for dividends and depreciation were \$5,000, transferred to contingent reserve and \$2,200 donated to patriotic and other funds.

As a result \$274,208 remained over to go to surplus account, which was further augmented by \$92,460 written back from the fund which the company had set up to redeem its preferred shares. Total surplus at \$1,347,945 therefore stood \$366,668 higher than at the end of 1916, and is now equivalent to more than 60 per cent of the par value of the capital stock outstanding.

Comparisons of profit and loss figures for three years follow:

	1917.	1916.	1915.
Profits	\$ 548,231	\$ 257,808	\$ 475,747
Less—			
Dividends	171,672	171,689	150,248
Depreciation	95,151	78,997	76,921
Cont. res.	5,000	5,000	5,624
Pat. f'd., etc.	2,200	1,200	1,500
S. S. loss		58,292	
War tax		34,202	
Redem. pfd.			25,208
Total ded.	\$274,023	\$349,376	\$259,501
Surplus	274,208	x91,568	216,246
Prev. do.	x1,073,737	1,072,845	856,599
Surplus	\$1,347,945	-\$981,277	\$1,072,845

x—Includes \$92,460 written back since 1916 from preferred shares' redemption fund.