

Conditions in the West

By E. CORA HIND.

STETTLE, Alberta, Aug. 29.

There are no dull moments in the West these days and the gentleman who originally remarked that life was "Just one — thing after another," has many endorsers.

When the hog raisers of the West got up Monday morning and found that the British Government had decided to buy no more Canadian bacon there was much running to and fro and profanity, if not knowledge, was increased.

There is no tremendous surplus in hogs in the Canadian West, but there is a good supply, and they have, in many cases, been produced on feed which otherwise would have sold for a high price, and were produced for what promised to be a very high and consequently a profitable market. This market has already dropped \$4.00 per cwt. in two days, and while with present receipts, always very light in harvest time, it may not go much lower for some little time, yet it will inevitably go lower when the usual fall marketing begins. If Britain does not buy Canadian bacon she will have to buy American and our hogs will probably find a market to the south, but they have a fair supply of their own and, moreover, they have a great corn crop, whereas we are decidedly short on coarse grains, so that they can finish their hogs more cheaply and will be in a position to make a lower price. This will be a keen disappointment to our men if not an actual loss.

There is little or no complaint so far as to the stand taken by Great Britain. It seems to be accepted almost without question that it has been done because Britain has found that Eastern Canadian packers have been making undue profits at her expense and that she is quite justified in resenting it. Hopes are entertained that the decision will be open to modifications.

If this is the case the sooner matters are adjusted the better as the effect in the west, if the determination is persisted in, will be the immediate curtailing of production. The general method of production in the Canadian West is that of one litter a year and the bulk of the sows are bred in December to come in May. As has already been stated, feed is short in the West, and will be a high price. The danger then is that men will sell their sows instead of breeding them. This would be a very great pity. Western hog men have been steadily improving the quality of their breeding sows for some years, and speaking broadly the class of brood sow being used is very fair. Any general liquidation of these animals because of high priced feed and lack of a market will

be a greater loss to the country as a whole than it will be to the individual farmer. The man who sells a 300 to 400 pound sow at \$15.00 a cwt., and the feed she would have consumed at a high price will not be out of pocket for the moment, and he will avoid the drudgery of winter care of hogs and possible losses at farrowing time next May. The country will have got 300 pounds of pork at a pretty high figure, and have lost the possibility of the production of 7 to 10 times that amount in the succeeding two years.

A GOOD MOVE.

The recent conference called by the Minister of Agriculture at Ottawa to, among other matters, devise ways and means of preventing untimely liquidation of livestock owing to feed shortage in some sections of the country was a move in the right direction, and not undertaken a moment too soon. There has been a heavy movement of stocker cattle from central markets back to the farms during the past eight months. Out of Winnipeg alone it has been several thousand head monthly. These cattle have made good progress, and up to the end of October, at least, will have plenty of feed off stubble, but as many districts are short of both straw and hay, a redistribution will be necessary for winter months. The United States buyers are keen after feeders and there has been an increased movement south of thinner butcher, or "short feeders" in the past two months, and undoubtedly they will turn their attention to stockers next. Canada needs all the cattle she has and any plan looking to the conservation of this stock in Canada will be welcome.

SOUTHERN ALBERTA.

Since last writing have made an extended trip in southern Alberta, by both train and motor, and find conditions most satisfactory. The eastern end of this territory has lighter crops than last year, but the western end, which has the largest wheat areas, is nearly if not quite as good as last year. The whole territory is over two weeks earlier as to harvesting and at the present moment is 80 per cent on stock and threshing will be fairly general next week. Of course, the labor problem is acute and this section has been overrun by a gang of the I. W. W.'s wanting \$5.00 a day for stooking, but the women came to the rescue and did much of it themselves. Threshing, however, is a more difficult matter. There is a feeling which daily grows stronger in the West, that the Government should take farmer aptly characterizes them as "Infernal World farmr aptly characterizes them as "Infernal World Wreckers."

Relative market bases—Chicago Galveston, New Orleans, Basic; Kansas City and Omaha, five cents less than basic; Duluth and Minneapolis, 3 cents less; St. Louis, 2 cents less; New York, 10 cents more than basic; Baltimore and Philadelphia, 9 cents more; Buffalo, 5 cents more.

The basic grades are numbers one hard winter, red winter and northern spring.

What \$2.20 wheat means.

CHICAGO, Aug. 30.

Fixing \$2.20 per bushel for No. 1 northern spring wheat and limiting millers' profits to twenty-five cents per barrel, means approximately \$12.50 per barrel for flour at Chicago, or about 60 cents under to-day's prices. It means a price at New York, Boston and Philadelphia of about \$13 per barrel.

To-day's spring wheat flour was quoted here at \$13.10 per barrel, with new spring and winter wheat flours approximately \$1 and \$1.60 respectively lower.

The announcement of the fixing of a price for No. 1 northern spring wheat was preceded by the promulgation of official regulations by J. F. Ball, chairman of the United States Millers' Committee, fixing 25 cents as the maximum average profit on a barrel of flour, and fifty cents a ton on feed. This was in accordance with an agreement entered into with Food Administrator Hoover by the committee of millers organized in Chicago last week. The new schedule of profits is to become effective Saturday.

In the purchase of wheat the millers will be permitted to buy at the customary transit points and be governed by the terms of their agreement with the Food Administration, grain corporation, the Government's buying agency. In order to bring about a fair distribution of wheat among the various millers, the Food Administration, grain corporation, the Government's buying agency, will establish the normal amount of wheat ground by each mill on the basis of the three years prior to January 1, 1917. It is the purpose of Mr. Hoover to bring about great milling activity in this country, and to ship flour instead of whole wheat with a view of saving ocean tonnage.

The price for wheat as fixed at Washington to-day did not entirely meet with the approval of either local grain men or millers. They declared it to be too high.

"I had thought \$2 would be a fair price," said B. A. Eckhart. "A price of \$2.20 is in my opinion a bit too exorbitant, when looked at from the viewpoint of the consumer."

KITCHEN WASTE BEING USED IN MAKING OF EXPLOSIVES.

Britain gets 1,000 tons of glycerine annually from army camps.

Kitchen waste is figuring largely in the manufacture of munitions at present. That glycerine is used in making propulsive explosives is pretty generally known. Formerly glycerine was manufactured mainly from seeds and nuts, linseed and copra, but it is now obtained as a by-product of soap, and so much of it is constantly required that the supply of oils and fats for soapmaking has become a matter of prime importance.

In the early stages of the war it was suggested that the waste of army camps in the form of bones and fat might supplement the primary materials from home sources, and the experiment made was so successful that the War Office established a plant for the treatment of such refuse in various centres. Now 1,000 tons of glycerine are annually produced from the army collection, and this provides propulsive explosives for the 12½ million shells.

Waste fat from the ordinary household can be similarly employed, and although it is not expedient from the standpoint of economy to set up an official organization for the collection of small amounts from individual households or even from clubs, hospitals, or other institutions, private thrift and enterprise in the preservation of kitchen waste and in its disposal to local collectors may effect extraordinary results. The grease in kitchen waste bought by the rag-and-bone man is ultimately converted by a series of processes into a melted fat, which is sold to soapmakers, and the by-product, glycerine, is finally requisitioned by the Ministry of Munitions and used for direct war purposes.

Householders are therefore officially urged to give the home supply of oils and fats all possible encouragement by saving kitchen waste and disposing of it to local collectors.

Prices of Wheat and Flour

\$2.20 is price fixed for U. S. 1917 wheat crop

The basic price of the 1917 wheat crop was fixed on Thursday night by President Wilson, upon the recommendation of the commission headed by Dr. H. A. Garfield, at \$2.20 in Chicago. This is the figure at which the food administration will buy supplies of what is known as No. 1 northern spring wheat for the United States and its Allies. It is expected that the wheat producers will fall into line without further dispute and make the price universal.

There are lodged in the food administration, under the Food Control Bill, however, powers to enforce the basic price fixed if recalcitrants are found. This probably will be done through a system of licenses, which may extend all the way to the retailers; should occasion arise for such a drastic procedure. Millers of flour and wholesalers will be brought under this licensing system at once, it is stated, and the powers also will be exercised to prevent hoarding or cornering of the market.

A schedule of prices of all grades and kinds of wheat, reduced to the \$2.20 basis for number one northern spring wheat was submitted to the President by the Food Administration and was made public to-night. It provides for an additional ten cents a bushel for wheat to the wholesaler in New York city as opposed to the \$2.20 price in Chicago. This would bring the price of basic wheat in New York city to \$2.32.

A reduction of five cents a bushel is provided for in this schedule, for number two grade, out of which a large part of the flour is milled. A flour expert to-night estimates that deducting about \$1.60 for by-products obtained, flour should be produced in the neighborhood of \$9 a barrel under the prices fixed, and that unless wholesalers and retailers were permitted to "run wild," there should be a considerable reduction to the public from the present range.

In his statement accompanying the price fixing report President Wilson sounded a warning that the Food Administration would adhere rigidly to the price determined upon by the Garfield committee, and intimated that the powers of the Food Control Bill will be exerted to the full if any evidence was obtained that producer, miller, wholesaler, or consumer was attempting to take advantage of the consuming public.

The price differentials worked out by the food administration to-night are: Number, one dark winter, \$2.24; hard winter basic, \$2.20; red winter basic, \$2.20; yellow hard winter, \$2.16; soft red winter, \$2.18; dark northern spring, \$2.24; red spring, \$2.18; hump-back, \$2.10; amber durum, \$2.24; durum basic, \$2.20; red durum, \$2.13; red walla, \$2.13; hard white basic, \$2.20; soft white, \$2.18; white club, \$2.16. Number 2 of each grade is 3 cents less; number 3, six cents less; No. 4, ten cents less.