

Seed Wheat for North Dakota.

The North Dakota railroad and warehouse commission met the representatives of the elevator companies and the grain dealers in Minneapolis on January 18 to discuss the desirability of making an entire change in the wheat used in that state this spring and to consider the expense of making such a change. It is said that much of the seed wheat used last spring did not germinate, which partially accounts for the short crop. After due consideration the following plan was decided upon by the farmers, and the commission undertook to devise a means for carrying it out:—

Those on high land will use seed raised on low places; those having a clay soil will use wheat raised on black loam, and Minnesota wheat will be secured to replace that raised in North Dakota.

In addition to the expense attached to the proposed change, it has been felt by the commission that the success of the plan depended on the co-operation of the elevator men, and it was for the purpose of seeing what assistance would be rendered by the Minneapolis firms that the conference was held. After discussing it was fully decided that the commission should draw up a circular letter to be sent to the agents of all the elevator companies, in which the latter are interested, to save all the best wheat offered for sale, to purchase it, unload from wagons, etc., and load on to cars in transit for such North Dakota points as the commission may suggest, and to store when necessary, the only expense to be borne by the farmer being that of transportation and the original purchase price. The cost of storing, loading and unloading, etc., will be the contribution of the elevator men to the farmers in making the change. This arrangement was considered satisfactory to the commission and it was decided that as soon as possible the letter should be written and printed copies would be furnished to the elevator firms to be sent to their agents. Nearly all of the larger elevator companies were represented in the meeting and two of the three members of the commission were here.—*Farm Implements.*

Cultivation of Flax.

Flax is a crop which might be grown to advantage more largely in Manitoba, on new land, as it is said to be particularly adapted to the first crop on virgin soil. The *Western Farm Journal* speaks as follows regarding this crop in the United States:—

The growth of flax for seed in the United States is now practically limited to five states, namely, Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska and South Dakota, and it is so largely a pioneer crop that the production is declining even in these states as they grow away from pioneer conditions. It is not one of the crops that the department of agriculture reports regularly from year to year, and statistics of continuous production are therefore not available, but an effort was made, by special investigation, to ascertain the acreage and yield for the years 1891 and 1892, and from the report based upon the investigation it appears that in 1891 the five states named grew 1,696,239 acres of the 1,927,003 acres devoted to flax in the country, which is equivalent to 89 per cent. of the acreage. In that year the five states named produced 13,938,081 bushels of seed, the total production of the country being 15,455,272 bushels. The production of the five flax seed states therefore amounting to 90.5 per cent. of the total crop of the United States. In 1892 the acreage devoted to flax in the entire country was 1,477,361 acres, of which the five states named furnished 1,374,905 or 93 per cent., and the yield for the whole country was 11,103,440 bushels, of which 10,294,057 bushels were grown in the five flax seed states, the product of these being 92.7

per cent. of the whole. The acreage decrease from 1891 to 1892, 23.2 per cent., and the yield decrease, 27.5 per cent. The decrease of acreage in the five flax seed states was a little less than 19 per cent., and the decrease in the yield was 26.4 per cent.

When the nature of flax culture for seed is considered, the further decline in its area and production may be fairly expected. It has now almost wholly disappeared east of the Mississippi River, and while high prices for seed might temporarily increase the area devoted to it, it is nevertheless bound to decline. As has been said, it is a pioneer crop, grown on new soil because it is valuable as a subduer of rich virgin prairie, and because it is an easy money crop at a time when an easy money crop is badly needed, but no soil will long endure its cultivation. In Belgium, where it is grown for fibre, once in eight, twelve, and, in some cases, twenty years is as often as the farmers care to grow it. In the flax districts of Ireland eight years is the rule. Should the time come when it shall be grown for fibre in this country a similar rule will probably be found necessary here, but in the meantime, as long as it is grown for seed merely, its cultivation will grow of less and less importance as the pioneer conditions which make it desirable are receded from.—*Western Farm Journal.*

Flour Trade in England.

We hear from millers complaints of bad trade, but all are running their plants full time, and the small range of profit is in reality the only cause of complaint. Importers of foreign flour assure us that quotations in America are fully 1s 6d per sack over the Liverpool parity and that shipments hence during the remainder of the season will be very light, but this specious cry has so often been heard before that we imagine no attention will be paid to it any longer, for the truth is that the United Kingdom this season is importing at the rate of 8½ million sacks per annum, or fully equal to the actual imports of last season when all previous records were beaten. It is of course possible, if not probable, that for the next few weeks shipments may be light, and that by the end of the season the aggregate quantity of foreign flour imported may be a few hundred thousand sacks less than last year's great total, but we feel that it will only lead to disappointment and loss if reliance be placed upon the theory of seriously reduced receipts of flour from America this season. Such a change in the usual course of trade can only take place slowly, and although we look forward with hope to the day when British flour will hold its own market and compete with America on neutral ground, yet the time is not yet.—*Corn Trade News*, January 16.

Freight Rates and Traffic Matters.

The *Chicago Daily Trade Bulletin* of Jan. 27 says:—The railroads are having very little in grain, and although agents claim to be maintaining the new tariff, there were unconfirmed rumors of private cuts. The tariff rate on flour and grain to New York is 25c per 100 lbs and 30c on provisions. Through business to Liverpool was slow and rates steady at 34½ to 37.60c per 100 lbs on flour, 22.55c per bushel on wheat, 22c corn, and 45 to 49.60c per 100 lbs on provisions. There was a better demand for vessels to load and store grain for spring shipment, and rates were steady at 2½c on wheat and 2½c on corn to Buffalo, and 3½c for corn to Kingston.

The C.P.R. has made a traffic arrangement with the Great Northern by which the C.P.R. enters Seattle. The arrangement goes into effect February 1st and a daily service each way will be commenced. It will be a joint train, the Great Northern handling it to New Whatcom, and the C.P.R. from Whatcom to Vancouver.

New Wheat Fields in Africa.

It may be recollected by some that about a year or two ago mention was made in these columns of the arrival in this country of samples of wheat and barley from Uganda, says the *Liverpool Corn Trade News*. We now give an extract from the *Manchester Guardian* of Jan. 12 bearing upon the same subject:—

"I hear that samples of both wheat and barley grown on the Kikuyu plateau in British East Africa have reached the country, and that in Mark Lane the very highest opinion is expressed of the quality of both samples. This is especially the case with reference to the barley, which I am told has been declared to be as fine a sample as has ever been shown in the market. The Kikuyu plateau is on an average from 5,000 feet to 7,000 feet above sea level, and is one of the regions which Captain Lugard refers to as a probable field for European occupation, although situated within the tropics. As compared with Nyasaland it has several advantages as a grain producing region, not the least of which is that while the part of the Lake Nyassa region most readily available for cultivation—the Shire highlands—is a succession of hills and valleys, on the Kikuyu plateau there is a stretch of country 100 miles long which is nowhere below 5,000 feet above sea level. Of course nothing can be done to develop this great grain growing region until cheaper modes of transport are introduced, and I believe that the advocates of a railway from Mombasa to the Victoria Nyaruz are especially pleased at the result of the experiment of growing wheat and barley in a district through which the projected line would pass. It is possible that samples of this wheat and barley may be on view at the meeting of the Royal Geographical Society next Monday evening, when Dr. Gregory, of the British Museum, is to read a paper on his ascent of Mount Kenia and his journey in East Africa."

Manitoba and Northwestern Railway.

Mr. Justice Binn delivered judgment at Winnipeg on Wednesday on the application made to him by the English bondholders of the Manitoba and Northwestern Railway for leave to file a bill for the appointment of a receiver and foreclosure of their mortgage. The petition was filed on behalf of Francis Douglas Grey, of East Sheen, Surrey, England; Lieutenant-Colonel and Sir J. R. Heron Maxwell, of Hamilton House, Tooting, Surrey, baronet. By a deed dated April 16th, 1886, the first 180 miles of defendant's rail were granted to the petitioners as trustees for certain bondholders for advances made. The deed contained a provision that in case of default in payment the trustees could take possession of the railway and operate the same. Default has been made in payment. In June last, on the application of the plaintiffs, who were judgment debtors, a receiver was appointed by the court. The petitioners allege that the revenues from the first 180 miles are more than sufficient to pay the running expenses of that division, but the receipts from an additional portion of the road and two branches are not sufficient to pay the running expenses thereof, and the receiver has applied monies which he has received from the first division in and towards the running expenses of the other portions of the road. The petitioners ask that leave may be granted to them to take such proceedings in the court as they may be advised for the appointment of a receiver and for the foreclosure of their mortgage.

His Lordship dismissed the petition with costs, except that he held that the respondents had not shown any reason why the petition, so far as it asked for leave to proceed to enforce the execution of the deed of further assurance of the second fifty miles by the company, should not be granted.