

Our English Letter

Weather and Crops—A Trying Harvest—How Ireland is Cropped—Live Stock—Irish Crops—A New Pig Disease—The Cider Industry.

London, Sept. 14, 1905.

The past two months have been wet and unsettled and very trying ones to farmers. When corn harvesting operations first commenced it looked as if the corn would be picked up in double quick time, and all went as merrily as the proverbial marriage bell. Matters have turned out vastly different in this respect and the finishing up of the harvest has been a dragging affair. It is not now wanted the rain which upset these calculations, but the showers, without being continuous, have been quite sufficient to prevent all sorts of corn drying and being transferred to the stock. Bearing on agricultural prospects, a Buckinghamshire farmer writes me and I cannot do better than give you his exact words:

"The harvest is about finished in this district, but I hear there is a great deal out on and under the Chelms Hill. I hear of rather disappointing yields of wheat and I am not surprised, as I always thought the crop was over-estimated. We have had nice rains for the roots and young clovers, but none too much for the pastures, which had got very dry. Work will be well forward and plenty of vetches and rye can be done at once. I have been over a vast tract of country during the past week, from here to Norfolk and thence to Scotland, and although the roots look healthy, there are a good many fields that are patchy, but they say in Norfolk that they have a record crop of mangolds. The harvest in Scotland is very much of it to cart, they have had such hindering wet weather for three weeks."

HOW THE LAND IS CROPPED

The principal point of the agricultural returns for 1905 is the fact there are 36,778 acres less under crops and grains than there were last year. Wheat, which is represented by 1,796,985 acres, shows an increase of 421,701 acres, while barley (1,715,694 acres) shows a decrease of 127,022 acres, and oats (3,051,476 acres) shows a decline of 201,586 acres. Profiting, it may be, by last year's experience of an over-abundance of turnips, the average this year shows a decrease of 14,831 acres. Potatoes, on the other hand, show an increase of 38,262 acres, so that with the very favorable reports which come to hand of the condition of the crop, the consumers should be as well off this year as they were last. Mangolds, cabbage, peas, rye and beans also show increased acreages, while there are decreases in turnips, rape and lucerne.

Grass, both for hay and in rotation, shows a decrease amounting to 193,975 acres, while the increase of permanent pasture goes on, amounting this year to 162,438 acres. Permanent grass is reported for 17,200,494 acres, and rotation grass 4,477,520, or a total of 21,678,014 under all sorts of grass, while the total area of cultivated land covers an area of 32,295,832 acres. The crop crop figures tend to show that there is an increased interest in the profit of this crop. The total acreage for the present year works out at 48,986, as compared with 47,799 in 1904 and 47,928 in 1903.

LIVE STOCK

A noticeable feature of the returns in connection with the live stock of the farm is the fact that substantial increases are shown in almost every department. Thus, horses numbering in all 1,572,

423, show an increase of 12,197, the greatest expansion being apparent in the case of unbroken horses one year old and over. Cattle number in all 6,987,662, an increase of 128,668, cows showing an increase of 28,712, two-year-olds and over of 40,681, yearlings 41,237, and calves 18,008. There is a large decrease in the case of sheep over one year old amounting in all to 166,085, but an increase in ewes and lambs counterbalances this and leaves a net surplus of 50,018 over the total of last year, which was 25,267,178. Pigs show a decline of 436,725, as compared with last year.

IRISH CROPS

The figures published for Ireland show that the total area under crop in the sister Isle is 2,261,696, being a decrease of 12,269 acres compared with last year of 12,269 acres. Compared with last year there has been an increase of area under wheat, rye and barley, while there are decreases of oats, barley, and beans. The area under potatoes has decreased, as also has mangolds, and cabbages. The area for hay under "clover, etc.," is 628,818 acres, being a substantial increase of over three thousand acres. There is an increase of permanent pasture and the hay crop from all sources is also greater. There has been an increase of 4,002 horses since this time last year, while cattle exhibit a decrease of 21,496, sheep of 76,696, and pigs of no fewer than 150,944.

A NEW PIG DISEASE

A formidable disease has manifested itself in Kamuldischire, and there is every possibility of it becoming epidemic over the whole country. It is suggested that the trouble is swine erysipelas, a form of pig trouble which is common enough on the continent and in Germany in particular, but no doubt the investigation that is being undertaken by the Board of Agriculture will throw some light upon a trouble which is at present obscure. The officials have the trouble well in hand and they hope to stamp it out before it gets bad; should it once get out of hand it would cost the country a lot of money. Many theories are extant as to how the trouble originated, but the most popular and plausible one is that it was imported with foreign—probably German or Russian—meal or corn.

THE CIDER INDUSTRY

The cider industry has grown vastly of late years and this palatable drink has carried for itself a high position. The way in which it has developed is evidenced from the fact that there is now a national fruit and cider institution established near Bristol. These remarks only leading up to the interesting fact that this body have decided this season to carry out a number of experiments to determine how far apples which ordinarily produce poor cider may be improved. To accomplish this the committee are prepared to receive from any grower a quantity of such apples of not less than half a ton and they will be prepared to pay a market price for the apples or return the cider when made.

NOTES

Now that the summer holiday season is practically over and the bulk of Londoners have returned to town, business of all sorts is settling down. Things have not been very brisk of late. The provision markets are not particularly interesting just now, with the exception

of cheese, where prices show every symptom of going higher.

Butter \$1.75 above the figure ruling for last year, at least that is the official Danish figure, actually about \$1.25 would about meet the case.

The supplies of fresh fruit are ample and varied indeed at Covent Garden—once or twice there has been such a glut that a lot of stuff has been practically given away. A. W. S.

Deputy Minister for Alberta

Mr. Geo. Harcourt, B.S.A., has been appointed Deputy Minister of Agriculture for Alberta by the new government of that province. Mr. Harcourt is well known to the farmers of Alberta. For nearly three years he has filled the position of Superintendent of



Mr. Geo. Harcourt, B.S.A.

Farmers' Institutes and Fairs for the Northwest Territories, and has shown in that capacity that he is capable of initiating and carrying through movements of educational value to the country. His selection as the executive head of the agricultural department of Alberta seems to be a wise one.

Demonstration Fairs

Two demonstration fairs will be conducted by the Department of Agriculture as follows: At Beachburg, Renou County, October 4-6, and at Simcoe, Norfolk County, on October 17-19. These will be purely agricultural shows with several special educational features. Competent persons will be in charge of each exhibit to explain the many features to visitors. A meeting will be held the evening of the second day at both exhibitions to discuss fair matters in general.

Other agricultural societies in the province are being urged to send delegates to these fairs. Half rates have been secured on the railways, and the expense of doing so will not be very great.

August 15th Issue Wanted

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