BRITISH FOOD SUPPLY IN SAFE POSITION.

The total annual wheat requirements of the United Kingdom are in round figures about 238 million bushels of which quantity only about 58 million bushels, or one-fifth, are produced at home. With its free food markets practically all the wheat-producing countries send their surplus of wheat to the United Kingdom, and this so works that any shortage from one country in any particular year is made good by the surplus supplies from other countries. But though the countries thus laid under contribution are numerous (not less than 14) the chief sources of supply are practically limited to six countries, viz., Canada, British India, Australia, the United States, Argentina and Russia, the first three countries being within the British Empire and the last three closely bound to the United Kingdom by ties of kindred, friendship and interest. The supply from Russia, amounting to from 10 to 30 million bushels according to season, must it is feared be greatly curtailed if not entirely cut off owing to the war. At any rate the supply from that source cannot now be certainly counted upon. The supplies from Germany and Austria-Hungary necessarily cease and France will retain all her produce; the Roumanian supply also can hardly be relied on: so that a total deficiency of from say 22 to 25 million bushels will have to be furnished from countries other than those mentioned.

Can this deficiency be supplied either by countries within the Empire or by other friendly countries? If we assume that of the quantities now exported to countries other than the United Kingdom by Canada and Australia 10 million bushels can be diverted by each of these countries to the United Kingdom, 20 million bushels of the British deficiency can thus be supplied, leaving only the small balance of from 2 to 5 million bushels to be furnished by non-belligerent countries.

Although this year, owing to drought, the yield of wheat in Canada may not equal the excellent out-turn of 1913 the reports of crop prospects in the United States is this year particularly favorable, both as regards increase in area sown and anticipated yield. It has been stated in some quarters that the countries of the British Empire are in a position to supply the whole of the grain supplies required by the United Kingdom. This it will be seen is not borne out. It is however likely that higher prices for grain will stimulate greater production, and wheat will probably replace other crops to a considerable extent.

Similar considerations to those here noted apply to cereals other than wheat, these being imported by the United Kingdom largely for the feeding of farm live stock and therefore indirectly for purposes of food.

Upon a general view of the situation therefore it would appear that the effects of the war need not greatly disturb the equanimity of the British Empire as far as grain supplies are concerned, always of course provided that command of the seas continues to be retained.

Mr. J. S. Hough, K.C., of Winnipeg, has been elected a director of the Union Bank of Canada in succession to the late F. W. Heubach. Mr. Hough is one of the Canadian directors of the Royal Exchange Assurance.

AGENT LIABLE FOR NEGLECT IN CANCELLATION.

In warning agents against the use of incorrect methods of cancellation, the Fireman's Fund Record also reminds them that neglect, carelessness or delay on their part in cancelling policies when instructed to do so by the company, renders them liable in case of loss for the amount the company is called upon to pay. The Record says:

An unnecessary amount of matter is in open file on account of agents not being in possession of the correct method of cancelling policies. Quite frequently an agent will send a notice of cancellation to the insured, and in due time he will forward to the company either a cancellation receipt for last policy or the policy itself, signed by the insured.

It is ascertained upon inspection of the daily report pertaining to the policy that there is a mortgage clause attached, making the loss, if any, payable to a second party. The agent has either neglected, or overlooked, the fact that a notice of cancellation should also be sent to the mortgagee. Before the agent can be instructed to mail the mortgagee the proper notice of cancellation of the policy, a fire occurs destroying the property. While the insured has no claim against the company, the mortgagee has, and consequently either the company has to pay the mortgagee the amount of loss under the policy or defend itself in a lawsuit.

If a policy is to be cancelled, and the insured will not surrender the policy and/or if the mortgagee, if any, will waive his claim under the policy, the proper way to cancel said policy is to serve a written notice of cancellation by registered mail on the insured, and also the mortgagee, being extremely careful in wording the notice of cancellation so that the policy is cancelled on a certain date. A demand should be made of the post-office to return the registry receipts signed by the insured and the mortgagee. A copy of each notice of cancellation together with the post-office receipt and the registry receipt for each notice of cancellation should be mailed to the home office or its department which has jurisdiction over the risk.

The notice of cancellation must conform to the contract in the policy; different states have different forms of policies, and therefore different contracts. If the premium has been paid on the policy, the laws of some states require that the unearned premium be sent to the insured with the cancellation notice; the laws of other states make the payment of the premium a separate transaction and has no bearing upon the legal cancellation of the policy.

In connection with the cancellation of policies it might be well to impress upon our agents that neglect, carelessness and delay on their part in cancelling a policy within the time required by the contract of said policy, or within a reasonable time, when instructed to do so by the company, renders them liable for whatever amount the company might be compelled to pay the insured or mortgagee in event of loss.

Mr. A. E. Ham, insurance superintendent for Manitoba, will represent the Association of Western Superintendents of Insurance of Canada on the national council of the World's Insurance Congress, to be held at San Francisco during the Panama Exhibition next year. Mr. A. W. Ross will represent the Mainland Fire Underwriters' Association of British Columbia.