

year, owing to the drought. For the present year it is safe to say there will be a very great increase in the exports, compared with which the showing for the fiscal year of 1887 will be but a drop in the bucket. In 1886 the exports reached their maximum during the month of September, when they were \$231,241. In 1887 the maximum month was August, with exports of \$228,123. This was owing to the earlier harvest in 1887. The minimum month for exports was April in both years, when the amount got down to about \$7,000 each year. Imports show nothing like the variation from month to month that is found in the figures of exports. Thus in dutiable goods the largest imports for 1887 were in June, when they reached \$197,583, and the lowest in January, when they were \$67,533.

WHEAT STATISTICS.

Of all subjects which are considered statistically, wheat takes the lead, whether considered from a point of general interest, from the quantity of statistics available, or from the puzzling nature of the mass of "information" presented in figures. These statistics are capable of being presented by the professional manipulator so as to prove a perfect glut or a famine, according to the bullish or bearish proclivities of the operator. Those who have not given a great deal of attention to the wheat question, may be easily led astray by a little manipulation of statistics. It is best therefore not to readily form opinions and draw inferences from what appears to be a remarkably clear and convincing presentation of the situation. Great progress has certainly been made during the past few years in collecting wheat statistics, but the work has by no means been yet reduced to a science. There is room for a great deal of improvement, which will have to be accomplished before the figures furnished can be relied upon as accurate. Some lines of statistics, such for instance as the visible supply statement, are no doubt correct enough as far as they go, but so far as furnishing a key to the situation is concerned, they are only of auxiliary importance. It is only when taken in connection with many other statistics, many of which are but approximations at best, that the visible supply statement is of great value. Alone it is almost worthless, and to the imperfectly informed person may prove very misleading. How unreliable crop reports may be has been dem-

onstrated from the official returns made by the United States agricultural bureau for 1886. From the quantity of wheat marketed it has been shown beyond a doubt, that the official estimates were astray about 30,000,000 bushels in the spring wheat figures. Do not therefore place implicit faith in wheat statistics, especially when applied to crops which are not yet harvested.

OUR SURPLUS COMMODITIES.

If everything goes well for the balance of the season, Manitoba and the adjoining territory will have a much larger amount of produce to export this year than ever before in the history of the country. In fact the exports of former years will be meagre indeed, in comparison with the probable exports for the present year. In our first great product of wheat and wheat flour, the exports promise to be very large from the crop of 1887, and probably double what they were last year. The lowest estimate of the surplus wheat which will be available for export, given by any person in a position to make such a statement, is 6,000,000 bushels. Other estimates run considerably over this figure. But even taking the lowest amount, the showing will be very satisfactory. Since last year a number of new roller process flour mills have been established, from which it is safe to infer that a greater proportion of wheat than ever before will be ground in the country. Available markets for wheat and flour are too well known to require a reference here.

But whilst Manitoba has made progress in wheat-growing and milling, still greater progress has been made in other directions, including mixed farming. Of other grains besides wheat the province will have a surplus of both barley and oats. Of oats there will be enough over local consumption to supply the western territories, where the grain is not yet produced in sufficient quantities to fill requirements. The three oatmeal mills in the province will also manufacture for export probably to British Columbia and Eastern Canada. The sample is excellent, and the mills will have no trouble in turning out a first-class article. Even with this distribution, there will likely be a further surplus to be disposed of. The barley crop may not turn out a very good sample as regards color, owing to recent rains, but it is not yet known just how this will be, as samples have not yet

commenced to come in. Prices for barley were very low last season in Toronto, and if this fall and winter does not show an improvement in outside markets, it is not likely that this grain will be exported to any extent, as it could be used to better advantage at home for feed. All root and vegetable crops will be very large. Potatoes will be an enormous crop, and as the crop promises to be light in Eastern Canada, owing to drought, it would not be a matter of surprise should Manitoba export a considerable quantity of potatoes eastward from the crop of 1887. There will certainly be a sufficient surplus of potatoes and other vegetables to abundantly supply the importing districts of the western territories and British Columbia.

So much for the direct products of the soil. Next in importance comes the products of the dairy. Cheese making has received a considerable impetus this season, and the pasturage has been excellent. Manitoba can produce cheese of unequalled quality in richness and flavor, the natural prairie grasses possessing the properties to a large extent most favorable to cheese making. The excellence of our product is already commencing to be recognized abroad, and a market is now being opened in British Columbia. Instead of importing cheese as heretofore, Manitoba will this year have a surplus, probably sufficient to supply the country westward to the Pacific coast. At present prices in the east, cheese could be profitably exported from this province to Montreal and Liverpool.

In butter there will be a considerable surplus for export, sufficient to supply the country westward to the coast, and perhaps even greater than this. Butter is now strong and high in the east, and a good profit could be realized from exports to Eastern Canadian cities. A considerable export movement has been going on all the season from the province, to points west as far as Victoria, B.C. In butter there is great room for improvement, both in quality and mode of packing, these things being the only drawbacks. There need be no fears as to the finding of a profitable market for butter, if the quality and mode of preparing for market is right. Manitobans, however, have much to learn in this respect. Until the mode of manufacture is changed, so that the butter will be produced largely in factories, there will always be more or less trouble about disposing of a considerable portion of the product. The advantages derived from the factory, or creamery process are, that butter of a uniform quality can be turned out, whilst a uniform mode of packing can also be followed. There are several other articles available for export, to which curtailed space prevents a reference.