

Conditions in the West

By E. CORA HIND.

WINNIPEG, Aug. 15, 1917.

Have spent the period since my last letter in inspecting crop in Southern and Central Manitoba, in which sections I have motored 225 miles and travelled over 300 by train, and am glad to be able to report conditions very much better than I expected to find them, and with regard to late crops steadily improving. The weather has been ideal for filling, hot sun and light cool breezes during the day; cool at night, with heavy dews and an occasional shower. Even wheat that is very short in the head will yield well because it is filled to the top, and is very generally six-rowed. The sample is almost uniformly plump, and of an excellent color, and a very large percentage of the wheat seen on the route indicated will grade No. 1 Northern.

In Southern Manitoba, around such points as Morden, Plum Coulee, Winkler and Gretna, 50 per cent. of the wheat is in stook, but further westward it is later, and cutting will not be general before the 20th of the month.

There are, of course, plenty of acres that have been ploughed down and some that have been mowed

down for bundle feed only, but when all these allowances are made, Southern and Central Manitoba will have a crop of between 12 and 14 bushels average, and a fine sample. Moreover, it is a cheap crop to handle, owing to the light straw. Oats have improved considerable, and late oats especially, but nothing can make either oats or barley anything but a short crop; but even these grains will yield well in proportion to the straw, barley more especially.

Labor is very short, and practically no one is to be had for less than \$3.00 a day, but it is hoped, with the new labor arrangements, matters will improve with an influx from the south. A few local magistrates have had the courage to threaten the alien labor with 3 months in jail if they jump their contracts, but for the most part they have simply terrorized people into giving them pretty much what they ask.

Conditions in Alberta and Saskatchewan have also improved since last report. Hay will be a short crop, but pasturage is excellent, and cattle never looked better.

Canada's Fall Wheat Yield

The Census and Statistics Office has just issued a preliminary estimate of the yield of fall wheat, hay and clover and alfalfa for 1917, and a report on the condition of other crops based on the return of correspondents at the end of July.

AREA AND YIELD OF FALL WHEAT, HAY AND CLOVER AND ALFALFA.

The preliminary estimate of the average yield per acre of fall sown wheat for 1917 is 22 bushels, as compared with 21½ bushels in 1916, 29.41 bushels in 1915 and 31.70 bushels, the average of the seven years 1910 to 1916. The total yield of fall wheat for 1917 is therefore now estimated at 17,816,000 bushels, from 809,250 harvested acres, as compared with 20,060,000 bushels from 932,500 acres in 1916. In Ontario, the chief fall wheat province, the total yield is 14,515,000 bushels from 656,500 acres, as compared with 16,465,000 bushels from 774,800 acres in 1916, the average yields per acre being 22.11 bushels in 1917, and 21½ bushels in 1916. Saskatchewan now ranks as the second fall wheat province with 2,220,000 bushels from 105,700 acres, and Alberta is third with 836,000 bushels from 38,000 acres. The total yield of hay and clover is placed at 13,379,000 tons, the record crop from 7,892,900 acres in 1916. This year's total yield of hay and clover has only twice been exceeded, viz., last year and in 1911, when the yield was 13,989,000 tons. The average yield per acre this year is 1.70 tons, as compared with 1.85 tons in 1916, and 1.62 tons in 1911. The yield from alfalfa is 152,200 tons from 86,500 acres, as compared with 260,500 tons from 89,470 acres last year, the average yields per acre being 1.76 tons, as compared with 2.91 tons.

CONDITION OF SPRING-SOWN GRAINS.

The condition of spring wheat for the whole of Canada has receded from 85 per cent. of the standard at the end of June to 77 at the end of July. Oats show 76 compared with 85, barley 78 against 86, rye 81 against 83, and peas 85 against 89. The con-

dition of other crops on July 31 was as follows: beans 74, buckwheat 86, mixed grains 90, flax 88, corn for husking 76, potatoes 84, turnips 90, mangolds 86, hay and clover 88, alfalfa 86, corn for fodder 77, sugar beets 88 and pastures 83. Converted into a standard wherein 100 represents the average yield per acre of the nine years 1908 to 1916 the condition of the principal grain crops at July 31, 1917, was as follows: Fall wheat 94, spring wheat 92, all wheat 93, rye 96, barley 93, oats 88, potatoes 99 and flax 107. That is to say the yields per acre of these crops, according to their appearance on July 31, are expected to be below the average yields of the previous nine years by 6 per cent. for fall wheat 8 per cent. for spring wheat, 7 per cent. for all wheat, 4 per cent. for rye, 7 per cent. for barley, 13 per cent. for oats, and 1 per cent. for potatoes.

Throughout eastern Canada the condition of the crops generally on July 31 is reported as excellent. In Ontario spring wheat is marked as high as 91, and oats and barley are 93; but in the west excessive heat and drought during July brought the condition down by July 31 to figures below 70 per cent. of the standard, spring wheat being 68 in Manitoba, 63 in Saskatchewan, and 64 in Alberta, whilst oats are 62 in Manitoba, 53 in Saskatchewan and 57 in Alberta. Reports received during the last fortnight are, however, of somewhat more reassuring character. The Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture telegraphed (August 8) as follows: "Cool weather of past week and local showers generally have done much good to improve crop conditions. Wheat is filling well and cutting will be general in about 10 days. Oats are very short in straw, and from present indications will be very low in yield." The Alberta Department of Agriculture telegraphs (August 11): "Heavy rains and cooler weather prevailed throughout most of province during past week, and greatly benefited late crops. Grain harvesting will be general in several districts next week. Light frost in few districts on August 8 did very little damage excepting to vegetables in one or two places."

BIG WESTERN CROP.

Sir John Aird, general manager of the Bank of Commerce, received a wire from the superintendent of the Bank at Winnipeg, in which it is stated that a lower estimate of the western wheat crop than 200,000,000 bushels would not be warranted. This observation was made after three extensive trips through Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, and is regarded as the most accurate information yet available, as to the total yield in the prairie provinces.

An estimate of the yield of coarse grains can not be given yet.

The text of the message is as follows: "Reports from all districts indicate that grain heads are filling out surprisingly well. On information now available, a lower estimate than two hundred million bushels would not be warranted."

NICELY WORDED TRIBUTES.

Several very nicely worded tributes have been paid recently to the man who has been generally credited with the invention of creased trousers. Particular emphasis is laid upon the fact that he was compelled to walk alone in creased trousers, subject to no end of ridicule, a long time before he found imitators and followers, thus establishing his right to be called a true, because a fearless, reformer. There are a few who still persist in wearing trousers that bag at the knees, and when these are not sailors, and therefore ruled by unavoidable circumstances, they are usually regarded as eccentrics.

"Opportunity calls once at every man's door."
"Hard luck is a whole lot more sociable."—Pittsburg Post.

SIXTY MILLION TIRES ANNUALLY AFTER WAR.

(India Rubber World.)

It is not surprising that automobile tire manufacturing has become the principal department of the American rubber industry. Fully 4,000,000 cars are in operation in the United States to-day, a number more than four times the total for the rest of the world, and still the demand for machines keeps well ahead of the 40 per cent. average yearly increase of past years. Time alone can tell what effect, if any, the war may have upon this demand, but once prices regain their normal level the result is certain. The proportion of pleasure cars is large, but motor trucks in ever greater numbers are replacing the shortage of horses caused by the war, both in peaceful occupations and warfare itself. Leading automobile men assert that the point of saturation will not be reached until every family having an income over \$1,000 owns a car. This means not less than 10,000,000 cars, or two and one-half times the present total. Assuming an average life of five years per machine, an annual replacement of 2,000,000 cars, our present production, will be necessary to maintain 10,000,000 in operation.

Translating this prediction into tires, 10,000,000 cars will average five tires annually, or 50,000,000 in all. The 2,000,000 cars constructed every year will require 8,000,000 tires for original equipment, and as each owner soon buys a spare for quick change on the road 2,000,000 more may be added, making a colossal grand total of 60,000,000 tires, and a business amounting to \$1,250,000,000 annually.

COMMANDEERING MACHINERY FOR WAR.

(Iron Age.)

One of the largest machine-tool companies, operating several plants, is placing practically all of its output as the Government directs, and this policy is likely to extend to other plants as the Government necessities become more urgent.

A severe tax has been placed on many machine tool plants by the Government war programme. With calls from munition works, airplane factories and shipyards, in addition to the normal demand from a diversity of industries, the builders of metal working machinery have gradually been obliged to cancel or postpone delivery of many orders for private consumers not engaged on Government work, and turn their output over to concerns which the Washington authorities have designated as entitled to prior consideration.

Fortunately for the country, many companies which have been engaged in making munitions for the Allies have their plants well equipped, and their recent needs have been confined to a comparatively few machines to replace those which had become worn out or defective. New munitions plants have been or are being equipped, and the rapidity with which machine tools have been furnished to them is highly creditable.

ANOTHER BEAT FOR AMERICA.

According to recent despatches from Berlin, German men both on and off the firing line are wearing shirts made of paper and wood pulp, owing to scarcity of cloth. This will probably be hailed as something new and as further showing ingenuity of the Germans under stress of necessity. But, as in many other instances, the Yankee inventor was first in the field. Thomas A. Edison thought of the paper shirt about 25 years ago, and put it on the market. It failed to become popular, and soon passed out of use. There is one difference between the American and the German product. The American paper shirt was intended to be worn until soiled, and then thrown away. The German sends his to the laundry, and, though it generally returns to him a shapeless, sodden mass, he must don it again, for "shirt cards" are extremely scarce.—Wall Street Journal.

SITKA SPRUCE FOR AEROPLANES.

The only kind of wood that has been found to possess all essential qualities for air-craft construction is Sitka spruce, found principally in Oregon and Washington. Prior to the outbreak of war, the price of Sitka spruce was not more than \$100 per thousand; it is now \$200 per thousand.