

Crop Prospects for 1918

By ERNEST H. GODFREY, F.S.S.

Unusual importance attaches to the harvest of the North American continent this year, for upon it depends to a large extent the support of the allied troops in the field and the provisioning of our European allies whose home production is insufficient. In considering data recently published respecting crop prospects in the United States and Canada, we shall not greatly err in counting the two countries as a unit, seeing that in other directions this plan is being adopted in regard to questions affecting food supplies, whilst the recent brigading of American troops with those of the British and French shows how absolute is the unity of purpose which animates the forces battling for the sacred cause of justice and freedom.

On June 7th, the U.S. Department of Agriculture issued estimates of the areas sown to the principal grain crops, with also provisional estimates of total yields based upon the condition of these crops on June 1. The following statement gives the acreage sown and the anticipated yield:

1.—Areas and Yields of Crops in the U. S., 1918.

| Crops. | Areas Sown. Acres. | Yield |
|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| | | anticipated. Bushels. |
| Winter wheat | 36,392,000 | 587,000,000 |
| Spring wheat | 22,489,000 | 344,000,000 |
| All wheat | 58,881,000 | 931,000,000 |
| Oats | 44,475,000 | 1,500,000,000 |
| Barley | 9,108,000 | 235,000,000 |
| Rye | 5,435,000 | 81,000,000 |
| | | Tons. |
| Hay | 69,531,000 | 107,000,000 |

With the exception only of 1915, when nearly 60½ million acres were harvested, the area sown to wheat this year by the United States is the largest on record, whilst it exceeds that of 1917 by 23.2 per cent. This represents therefore a truly remarkable effort on the part of the farmers of the United States, and it is well to remember that we have still to learn the result of the seeding to corn, which is our neighbour's principal cereal and which last year occupied nearly 120 million acres. The areas sown to oats and barley show increases over 1917 of 2 and 3 per cent respectively, whilst rye, a crop which on both sides of the border is coming to be more extensively grown, shows an increase of 22½ per cent. The area devoted to hay shows a decrease, but only to the slight extent of 0.7 per cent.

Respecting the anticipated yield of 931 million bushels of wheat, this production has only once been exceeded, viz., in the extraordinarily abundant season of 1915, when the wheat harvested exceeded one billion bushels. As compared with 1917, the yield anticipated for 1918 represents an increase of 280 million bushels. The yield of oats is expected to reach 1½ billion bushels, which compares with 1,587,000,000 bushels last year and 1,549,030,000 bushels in 1915. It is, for 1918, 204 million bushels above the five year average, 1912-16. Of barley the prospective yield is 235 million bushels and of rye 81 million bushels, both the highest on record, greatly exceeding last year and also the quinquennial average. The yield of hay is placed at 107 million tons, also a record figure. It should be observed that these yields are stated to be "interpreted from the condition reports of June 1."

The table shows that notwithstanding the adverse circumstances under which the farmers of Canada have suffered in connection with the shortage of labour, they have succeeded in placing under wheat this year an increased acreage of 1,477,150 acres, or 10 per cent. The effort is really better than this, because the acreage sown to fall wheat last year was reduced through the severity of the winter by over one half, or more than 361,000 acres, a destruction quite unprecedented. Against this unfortunate condition, which however applies only to a small proportion of the total wheat crop, has to be set a fine and early spring, which prolonged the time available for the seeding of wheat and helped to offset the disadvantages of insufficient labour. For spring wheat only, the increased area sown is 1,861,750 acres, or 13 per cent. The area sown to oats is estimated at 133,859,000 acres, as compared with 13,313,400 acres last year, an increase of 545,600, or 4 per cent. The acreage of barley is 2,412,000, as compared with 2,392,200 in 1917, of rye 236,230 as against 211,880, of peas 200,330 as against 198,831, of mixed grains 506,830 as against 497,236, of hay and clover 8,210,800 as

against 8,225,034, and of alfalfa 104,200 as against 109,825. The areas sown this year to wheat, oats, barley and rye are the highest on record for Canada. Nearly all the provinces have considerably increased their acreage under spring wheat, Nova Scotia by 11, New Brunswick by 44, Quebec by 24, Ontario by 45, Manitoba by 7, Saskatchewan by 11, Alberta by 21, and British Columbia by 6 per cent. The acreage under oats is also increased by percentages ranging from 2 per cent in Saskatchewan to 13 per cent in British Columbia, Manitoba showing no change.

GRAIN AREAS IN THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES.

The acreage sown to wheat in the prairie provinces totals 15,348,500 acres as against 13,613,410 acres last year, to oats 8,827,000 acres as against 8,559,500 acres, and to barley 1,862,000 acres, as against 1,850,000 acres. To wheat, Manitoba has sown 2,618,000, Saskatchewan 9,222,000 and Alberta 3,508,500 acres. Under oats the acreages are for Manitoba 1,500,000, for Saskatchewan 4,602,000 and for Alberta 2,785,000, whilst for barley, Manitoba has 715,000 acres, Saskatchewan 663,500 acres and Alberta 483,500 acres.

In attempting at this early stage to forecast the approximate results of the harvest it is well to remember the old warning against "counting one's chickens before they are hatched," and the other time-worn proverb that "there's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip." Yet so eager is the demand for early indications of results and so all-important are the results hoped for, that one is perhaps more than usually justified in attempting to draw conclusions from early data. In the following table, therefore, I have added to the United States' figures—which are themselves provisional and contingent—a rough

approximation of the Canadian yields, based upon the areas sown and upon recent reports of condition in the West. In calculating the total estimated production of wheat, a yield per acre equal to the decennial average is assumed for all the provinces, excepting Saskatchewan, the yield for which is provisionally placed at 15 bushels per acre in accordance with the latest report of the Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture. For each of the other crops an average yield per acre is assumed.

3.—Total Estimated Yields of the United States and Canada.

| Crops. | Canada. | | Total. Bushels. |
|------------------|------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| | U.S. Bushels. | Canada. Bushels. | |
| Wheat | 931,000,000 | 280,500,000 | 1,211,500,000 |
| Oats | 1,500,000,000 | 483,500,000 | 1,983,500,000 |
| Barley | 235,000,000 | 65,000,000 | 300,000,000 |
| Rye | 81,000,000 | 4,300,000 | 85,300,000 |
| | Tons. | Tons. | Tons. |
| Hay | 107,000,000 | 12,300,000 | 119,300,000 |

Thus, for wheat, we have a total combined production by the United States and Canada, estimated at 1,211,500,000 bushels. Placing the home requirements of the United States for food and seed at 600 million bushels and of Canada at 100 million bushels, including loss in cleaning, and not taking into account any "carry over" from the previous year's crops, we have a possible exportable surplus of 511,500,000 bushels, a quantity which after satisfying the normal deficit of the United Kingdom should leave something like 290 million bushels for export to France and Italy, with probably also a substantial margin for further contingencies.

But excellent as are the prospects, owing to the increase of acreage in both countries, it is well in conclusion again to emphasize that the estimates of yield are largely conjectural, and are liable to be considerably affected for better or worse by the influence of the season between now and harvest.

Church Building and Church Lands

Sir,—“Denver, Colorado,” you remark in a recent issue of the Journal of Commerce, “has a city chaplain appointed and paid by the city council.” There are two cities whose example, I think, might well be taken into consideration in this matter, as well as Denver, Colorado; one of them is the city of Bethlehem, and the other is the celebrated city of Rome. As to Bethlehem, it is said, that it made provision for the cause of an infant religion with a manger in a stable,—“because there was no room for it in the inn”; as to Rome, I read in a book about Roman Antiquities which lies before me on the table, that “the whole territory of Rome, then very small, was originally divided into three parts, but not equal. One part was allotted for the service of religion, and for building temples.” The strange thing is that the city of Bethlehem, which provided for religion with a corner in a stable, has done much more, if we are creditably informed, for the service of religion, than the city of Rome, which set aside a whole third part of the land that belonged to the town for such a purpose.

Another thing which this same book upon Roman Antiquities informs me, is the point that “whatever had been legally consecrated as sacred, was ever after inapplicable to profane uses.” It is by no means as thoroughly or as widely known among the ranks of the people as it ought to be, that the entire theory about consecration demands that, if an object once has been consecrated, or set aside for the worship of God, then, if it is not, or if it cannot further be used for Divine worship, at least it ought now to be destroyed; certainly it ought not to be restored to profane uses. “If thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break its neck,” if the Israelitish farmer was not himself disposed to contribute to the sacrifice, and to take his own share in the worship of God, at least he was to get no profit, and no pleasure from the animal that was claimed for the sacrifice. If a consecrated building cannot further be, or is not used for Divine worship, and for the ends for which it has been consecrated, then it ought at least to be pulled down. It ought to be destroyed; it ought not to be employed for gain, or other profane uses. But now again, the land itself cannot be destroyed, and I have often hitherto had occasion to point out that there is here the foundation of an important and far-reaching religious, social, and political doctrine. Seeing that the land cannot be destroyed, therefore the land as such cannot be consecrated. Only the building which is upon the land can be destroyed, and it is only the building which is upon the land which can be consecrated.

It has been, I suppose, creditably reported with

regard to none other than one of the original apostles of the New Testament, that “having land, he sold it, and brought the money,” and made of the money some sort of contribution towards a religion. This may have been employed to obtain the use of some sort of suitable building for that religion. He did not try to consecrate the land as such, directly to the service of the religion.

The point is that here there may appear a basis for a possible reconciliation of the age-long conflict between the respective claims within the same land of Church and State. That is to say, that the State should retain within its own hands its control of the land, but should leave to the Religious Denomination the care instead of the buildings that may be erected upon the land. Naturally, I agree with your own correspondent that “mankind seems to be incurably religious.” Seeing then that it is admitted that the great body of the citizens are thus afflicted with an incurable disease, it seems only the path of ordinary prudence for the city fathers to set aside some certain portion of the land of the city as an asylum for this same incurable disease. By retaining their own hold upon the land thus granted, they can then bring pressure to bear where pressure is most needed, and they can insist that the buildings raised upon the land thus granted, shall be used solely for the ends of the asylum, and to treat the incurable disease. That they should not be employed, for example, for purposes of gain; that they should be excluded from advertisement, which is an engine of gain; that they should not be allowed to appear in the advertising columns of the daily papers, nor to disfigure the fair streets of the city with great glaring notices and sign-boards. That the worship of God should be maintained in these buildings with regularity and unbroken, and with a certain minimum actual attendance and congregation; that the buildings should be kept in repair at the proper cost of the religious congregation, and should be an ornament and a source of pride to the city. I do not think that such a course of action literally would prove a panacea for all our difficulties, and all our troubles. I have no doubt that it would bring a long list of difficulties and troubles in its own train. But I do think that it can plead as a precedent something or other in the history both alike of ancient Rome and of ancient Bethlehem; and I do think that there is more to be said for it than for the scheme simply of putting some individual clergyman in a false position with the city council, after the example that is alleged of Denver, Colorado.

Montreal, Canada,

July 1st, 1918.