

damp, heating takes place just as with a prematurely stacked hayrick, and spontaneous combustion may at any time break out in flame, as it has often been known to do in the farmyard. Of late years the greatest care and vigilance have been necessary to guard against this.

—A serious pest has appeared within the last few years in the cotton fields of the South. It is spreading with great rapidity, and threatens to ruin the industry unless it can be successfully combated. The disease is a fungus, which attacks the roots, causing the plant to wither and die. It is most destructive in the vicinity of Charleston, S.C., and on the islands adjacent to the coast. The United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, has appointed William A. Orton, a botanical expert, to investigate the matter, and it is hoped that a practical way of extirpating the pest will be devised.

THE JUTE CROP IN BENGAL.

The first forecast of the jute crop in Bengal for the season 1899 has been published by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce. It furnishes estimates of the area and outturn of the jute crop up to the middle of June, and is compiled from the returns received from the twenty-six important jute-growing districts of these provinces. The cultivation of jute outside these districts is insignificant, and has been left out of consideration. The rainfall from January to April seems to have been generally near the average, but in May, with the exception of Burdwan and a few districts in North Bengal and Bihar, the rainfall was everywhere above the normal, and was excessive in East Bengal and in the districts of Hughli, the 24-Parganas and Nadia. This excess does not appear to have affected the crop much in East Bengal (Noakhali excepted), but is reported to have prevented the full area from being sown in Hughli and the 24-Parganas, and to have injured the seedlings in Hughli and Nadia. In the first fortnight of June the weather was, on the whole, seasonable, and weeding operations were carried out successfully in most places; but the rain that has fallen up to date this month may have interfered somewhat with late sowings. According to the revised estimates for the previous five years, the normal area under jute now amounts to 2,189,400 acres, against 2,224,300 acres shown in the forecast of last year. The total area in Bengal sown with jute during the current year appears from the returns to amount to 1,914,300 acres, against 1,624,400 acres sown in 1898. The great decrease in 1898 was due to a fall in the price of jute and a simultaneous rise in the price of rice. Since then the price of jute has risen while that of rice has fallen, and the increase in the area sown with jute this year, amounting to 289,900 acres, or 17.8 per cent., is undoubtedly due to these fluctuations in prices. It will be noted, however, that the area is still smaller than that which was sown in 1895, 1896 and 1897, the cultivators not having yet forgotten the fall in the price of jute which took place in 1897. In spite of the excessive rainfall in May in many important districts, the prospects of the crop as reported up to the middle of June are good, and the latest reports received from the chief jute-growing districts confirm this favorable report. In the districts of Mymensingh, Rangpur, Tippera, Dacca, Pabna, Faridpur, Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Pogra, Purnea, and Jalpaiguri, each with an area of over 50,000 acres, and containing about 87 per cent. of the total jute-growing area of Bengal, the average outturn estimated for the year amounts to 93.2 per cent. In ten districts, the present estimates of the crop are returned as 100, or over 100 per cent.; in twelve districts they are now estimated at 75 to below 100 per cent.;

and in four districts only—viz., Hughli, Nadia, Darjeeling and Noakhali—are the returns below 75 per cent. Although rain has been somewhat excessive lately, it does not appear to have injured the crop; but the final outturn is greatly dependent on the weather experienced in July and August, and on the height of the rivers in those months. It would appear probable, therefore, that if the present conditions continue, a crop slightly below the average will be reaped in the area sown this year. It must be remembered, however, that this area is still a good deal below the average, and that the total outturn for the whole province will be accordingly, in all probability, considerably below the normal.

Very little jute is now left in hand from the stocks of 1897 and 1898. Taking into consideration the estimates of area and outturn detailed in the returns, and accepting three bales per acre as the outturn of a normal or 100 per cent. crop, the gross outturn of jute may be roughly estimated for the present crop at 58 lakhs of bales. The normal outturn for the province may be taken as about 66 lakhs of bales, so that the present estimated outturn approximates to 87 per cent. of the normal outturn. Taking 16 annas to represent the normal outturn, the outturn of the present crop is thus estimated to amount to 14 annas of the normal.

THE LATE JOHN LIVINGSTONE, SR.

John Livingstone, sr., died at his home in Listowel, Ont., Sept. 6th, in the 89th year of his age. Mr. Livingstone was the last surviving member of the family of Dr. Livingstone, the African explorer, and was two years older than his famous brother. There was a strong family resemblance between the two brothers, and they maintained an intimate correspondence until the doctor's death. The deceased, John Livingstone, was the eldest son of Neil Livingstone, of Blantyre, Scotland, where he was born on May 15th, 1811. He was married in Scotland in 1834, to Sara Mackenzie, who predeceased him in Listowel nearly 19 years ago. He came to Canada in 1840, and lived in Lanark, Lanark Co., for 20 years, engaged in general store-keeping. He came to Perth county in 1860, starting a general store in a then small hamlet. He built up a large and prosperous trade, retiring in 1873. Since that time Mr. Livingstone indulged his fondness for travelling for many years, spending his summers among his friends in Scotland, and of late passing his winters with his sons on the Pacific Coast, his last trip to the Coast being in the winter of 1898. The surviving members of his family are: Neil Livingstone, Rockwood, Ont.; Dr. Henry Livingstone, California; Mrs. J. W. Scott, Listowel; John Livingstone, jr., Listowel, and Charles Livingstone, Seattle, U.S. For the past eight years he has made his home with his son in Listowel. He had been a man of vigorous constitution, and in spite of his great age was of active habits until his strength began to fail this spring, since which time he had gradually sank until the end came. His wide reading, his travels, his fund of anecdotes, his quiet and genial humor, and the kindness of his heart, made him a most entertaining and agreeable companion, and he was held in general esteem for his honorable and manly characteristics.

—Manila hemp rose ten shillings in London, August 12th, being quoted at £39 10s. Large quantities were bought at this price on the prospect of a further rise in consequence of the resumption of hostilities and the belief that all the Philippine ports are closed or will be closed. While the price in London is only £39 10s., owing to large stocks and the quantities now in transit, the price at Manila is £49, the highest on record. The hemp dealers believe the military operations will drive the natives from the fields, and that the world's supply will be practically cut off.