

Conditions in the West

By E. CORA HIND.

WINNIPEG, Man., July 27.

Conditions in the west are by no means satisfactory so far as crop is concerned. The heat has been intense and the rainfall exceedingly scanty since July set in. Rain fell over a considerable area last night, but it was not general. The frost of the 21st of June gave the crop a great set back and there has never been a sufficient volume of rain since to overcome that set back. Pretty well all the wheat is in head, but straw is very short and heads promise to be short also. All coarse grains are short and many of the crops are light.

Even with a good rain right now and fine weather with occasional showers for the balance of the filling season there cannot be more than a two third crop, and that is only possible with a soaking rain all over the west immediately and there is not much prospect of a general rain at present. The only thing which promises to be a full crop at the moment is potatoes.

Hay crop is both short and light. In spite of the great heat there has been little hail damage so far, excepting a few districts in northern Alberta and

one strip two miles wide and eight miles long in Saskatchewan.

The labor problem is still unsolved, officially, though there is a tentative arrangement between Ottawa and Washington to use the army of harvest hands which year after year come from Oklahoma to North Dakota and Montana. If the arrangement proves up it will probably meet the requirements to a very considerable extent. The number of men required will not be so great as if there were a full crop. There are districts, however, where there will be 30 and even 40 bushel crops and these will require their full quota of men.

SAMPLE MARKETS.

The announcement of a sample market at Fort William almost concurrent with the announcement of a fixed price for wheat is a curious anomaly. It is understood farmers organizations are still officially protesting against this being done. There is absolutely no excuse for its establishment at the present time and the only people who can possibly benefit by it under a fixed price for wheat are the mixing elevators

at Fort William and they, as a matter of fact are the only people who have pressed for it.

Some of the farmers' organizations attribute the sudden announcement to a political scheme on part of the Hon. Robert Rogers in view of an approaching election, his idea being to go to the country with a cry that he has given them free wheat and sample markets.

Grain exchange men shrug their shoulders and refuse to discuss the matter.

The circuit of big western fairs is drawing to a close and 1917 will go down in history as the new record for livestock exhibits both as to numbers and quality. There has never been anything like these fairs in the west before. The greatest improvement is in the sheep and swine classes. The increase in these has been from 50 to 75%. Sales of livestock have been good at all the shows and very fancy prices are being paid for good rams and good boars.

Some idea of the demand for stallions may be gathered from the fact that the famous Bar U ranch has sold 24 purebred Percheron stallions of their own breeding since March last. The cheapest of these stallions would be not less than \$1,500.

There has been a phenomenal demand also for bulls of beef breeds and quite a number changed hands at Brandon to go to the United States.

Canadian Sales Abroad

Canadian Exports In First Six Months of Year Totalled \$620,234,481.

Exports of Canadian produce in the first six months of the current year were valued at \$620,234,481, an increase of \$144,778,000, or about 30 per cent., over the record total reported for the corresponding period of 1916. As compared with the corresponding period of 1914, before war demands created an insatiable demand for everything that Canada could supply, the increase is \$472,004,000, or about 320 per cent.

Taking the preliminary figures as reported month by month from Ottawa, and completed for the half year by the June statement issued the other day, the following comparisons of six months' exports of Canadian produce on the one hand and imports entered for consumption on the other may be made for a period of six years:

Six months.	Exports.	Imports.	Balance.
1917	\$620,234,000	\$534,608,000+	\$85,625,000
1916	475,456,000	350,104,000+	125,352,000
1915	216,171,000	205,759,000+	10,412,000
1914	148,230,000	260,336,000—	112,106,000
1913	160,621,000	340,266,000—	179,645,000
1912	139,594,000	291,871,000—	152,276,000

(+)=Excess of exports. (—)=Excess of imports.

The figures as given in the foregoing exclude the bullion returns, which are complicated now by special transactions having no bearing on Canadian trade, and also exclude exports of foreign produce through Canadian channels. They deal entirely with what Canada has sold abroad out of her own store and what she has purchased from abroad for her own use.

IMPORTS RISE SHARPLY.

While the figures are highly satisfactory, it may again be noted that Canada is not doing as well as a year ago in respect to her balance of trade with other countries. The export gain of about 30 per cent. must be considered along with a gain of about 52 per cent. in imports.

In the first 6 months of 1916 we established a favorable balance of about 125 millions; this year it is less by about 40 millions. While we have been speeding up our sales, with considerable benefit from high prices, we have also been buying abroad more heavily.

It is not easy to say how much of the buying has been necessary and how much could be set down to extravagance resulting from the great prosperity of the moment. Heavy buying of raw materials to go into goods which are later exported as manufactures no doubt is a large factor in the expansion of imports, but hardly the only one. It would be a matter of regret if this more rapid expansion in our purchases as compared with our sales should mean that our favorable balance has turned definitely downward for the time being.

The figures of the June statement show a considerable falling off from the high level reached in May. In the latter month there was the usual spring

rush of goods which had been waiting on the opening of navigation for shipment. In June, conditions in that respect would naturally be more normal.

As compared with May there was a falling off of about 33 millions in exports and a falling off of about 10 millions in imports. As compared with June a year ago there was a gain of about 21 millions in exports and a gain of about 31 millions in imports.

June figures for six years compare as follows:

June.	Exports.	Imports.	Balance.
1917	\$116,285,000	\$97,515,000+	\$18,770,000
1916	95,635,000	66,399,000+	29,236,000
1915	42,805,000	35,324,000+	7,481,000
1914	28,000,000	45,750,000—	17,750,000
1913	33,619,000	57,957,000—	24,338,000
1912	29,246,000	53,587,000—	24,341,000

(+)=Excess of exports. (—)=Excess of imports.

RETURNS BY MONTHS THIS YEAR.

This year's returns of exports and imports by months show:

	Exports.	Imports.	Balance.
January	\$99,106,259	\$73,323,074+	\$25,783,185
February	68,224,383	68,030,469+	193,914
March	122,415,313	102,335,886+	20,079,427
April	65,145,449	86,807,809—	31,662,360
May	149,057,236	107,596,379+	41,460,857
June	116,285,841	97,515,067+	18,770,774

Totals

(+)=Excess of exports. (—)=Excess of imports.

Details of June exports in the usual classifications, with comparisons, follow:

	June, 1917.	June, 1916.	May, 1917.
Mine	\$4,961,037	\$7,755,875	\$6,323,572
Fisheries	1,185,376	1,267,883	1,105,506
Forest	5,451,576	5,846,672	5,007,147
Animals, etc.	7,331,668	8,473,780	11,376,808
Agricult.	57,869,423	38,744,527	71,793,023
Manufact.	39,021,170	32,252,447	52,949,625
Miscell.	465,591	1,294,678	501,555
Totals	\$116,285,841	\$95,635,862	\$149,057,236

WORLD'S WEEKLY SHIPMENTS.

Wheat—	
America	9,678,000
India	976,000
Argentina	307,000
Australia	1,276,000
Others	40,000

Total	12,277,000
Last year	14,462,000
Corn—1,608,000; last year 2,558,000.	
Oats—4,174,000; last year 5,437,000.	

REDUCTIONS IN PRICES OF BREAD AND MEAT IN GREAT BRITAIN.

Baron Rhondda announces a reduction of 25 per cent in the price of bread at an early date. A graduated reduction in the price of meat for the army and civilians, which by January will mean a thirty per cent decrease from the amount now paid also was announced. In discussing these reductions with the Associated Press, Baron Rhondda said:

"Steps have been taken to control the profits of butchers and others in a manner to ensure that the benefit will accrue to the consumer. The Food Controller is handicapped to a certain extent by a lack of knowledge of what the United States expect to do. Consequently, exhaustive price fixings are now difficult. It is hard for us to fix our prices until the United States has fixed hers.

"We have done much toward reducing the consumption of bread through economy. Twenty per cent less bread is consumed now than last year through a stoppage of waste and other elements. This has been done notwithstanding the recent shortage in potatoes which, happily, are plentiful now and reduced in price.

"During the past week I have been consulting with representatives of organizations in various localities, and they have promised every assistance in seeing that the orders of the Ministry are obeyed. Now, if we order a maximum price, we will be sure that it will be carried out."

AMERICANS LOOKING FOR PULPWOOD.

"The James W. Sewall office, timber explorers and surveyors, Old Town, Maine, reports the following work going on. Kenneth McR. Clark with two assistant cruisers and other labor is in the upper St. John region of Maine, exploring 50,000 acres there. R. L. Whitney with three assistant cruisers and labor is exploring 100,000 acres on the lower St. John watershed. Wentworth Peckham with two men is cruising 10,000 acres on the divide between the head of the St. John River and Penobscot waters. W. P. Billings with an assistant cruiser and several men is cruising 10,000 acres on the divide between the head shed. C. E. Cobb with an assistant and labor is exploring 75,000 acres on the upper Allagash. A. J. Preble with two assistant cruisers and labor is exploring 85,000 acres on the Aroostook River watershed; O. W. Madden, with an assistant cruiser and help is exploring 100,000 acres in the Red and Fish River watersheds. James A. Connors is exploring 10,000 acres in Nova Scotia; Francis Dougherty about 20,000 acres in New Brunswick and A. C. McPheters is making a rough reconnaissance of some 300,000 acres in western Ontario.

The Sewall office has about 50 men out and states that business is rushing as far ahead as can be seen. Pulp wood is being looked after much more than saw timber at present."

"Has prohibition made a difference in Crimson Gulch?" "Some," admitted Broncho Bob. "The boys now go and put their money in the bank their own selves instead of lettin' the barkeeper do it for them." —Washington Star.