

A VALUABLE REVIEW.

In order to make room for the summary of the report from Bureau of Industries for November, we leave over several editorials which should have appeared in this issue. Mr. Blue's report is reasonable and suggestive. The portion referring to the average yield of certain cereals in Ontario and nine States of the American Union must be very gratifying, and should have the effect of making Canadians more than ever satisfied with their own country. Altogether the summary given below will well repay careful perusal.

We have now reached the close of the growing season. It is a fitting time to review the results of farm operations for the year; to note the progress made in threshing and marketing grain, and in gathering the fall crops of fruit and roots; to give an account of the condition of live stock and the supplies of animal products, the breadth and appearance of the new crop of fall wheat, and the preparation of land for next spring's seeding.

The November Report of the Bureau of Industries deals with these and other subjects, the main object kept in view being to narrate facts rather than to draw inferences or express opinions. Additional statistics are also given, and the tables published in earlier Reports (having been carefully revised with the aid of more complete data) are reproduced. They show in concise form the extent and results of agricultural industry in Ontario this year,—the area of occupied and cleared lands, the acreage and produce of crops, the numbers of live stock, and the values of farm property.

The early part of the season gave but a faint promise of the rich harvest that has been gathered. April was dry and cold, with raw winds from the north and east, and sharp frosts almost every night. The temperature continued low until late in May, easterly winds prevailing, but with a marked increase in the rainfall. Forest trees were not fully out in leaf at the end of that month, and spring grains and grasses showed only a short and sickly growth. The fall wheat and clover had suffered greatly by the alternate freezings and thawings, and the fruit crop was ruined in the blossom by the conjoined effects of frost, wind and chilling rains.

But a marked change came with the month of June. There were warm days and genial showers, and under these influences grass and grain crops made vigorous growth, steadily improving until they were ready for the mower and reaper. Indeed it is doubtful if better crops all round have ever before been produced in the country, the only failures worthy of mention being orchard fruits and clover. Some damage and considerable delay were caused in western counties of the Province by the heavy rains of the wheat harvest season; but compensation was made in the benefits to corn, roots and pastures, which had suffered by the drought of July.

The bountiful nature of the harvest has been referred to. But this good fortune was not given to Ontario alone; large crops have been the rule nearly all over the continent,—a fact which must not be lost sight of when comparisons are made.

The reports of correspondents show that all late ripening crops have been favoured by the fall weather. There was generally just enough rain in August and the early part of September to promote healthy growth, and over a large part of the Province there was no frost to hurt vegetation until the 19th of October.

Corn, which fared badly throughout June and July, was greatly improved in the latter part of the season. It is an excellent crop in Essex and Kent, and fairly good in portions of Lambton, Middlesex, Oxford, Brant, Elgin, Norfolk and some of the Lake Ontario counties. In the counties of the St. Lawrence and Ottawa group it is a light crop and poor sample, having been caught in an immature state by fall rains and frosts, and in other parts of the Province little is grown.

Field beans are grown mainly in the counties of Kent and Norfolk in the west, and in the counties along the Ottawa river in the east. In the latter district there has been an excellent yield, though in some localities injury was done by frost. There has been also a good crop in Norfolk, but in Kent it ripened unevenly owing, doubtless, to the excess of August rains.

There was a large area under buckwheat in the eastern counties of the Province, towards the lower end of Lake Ontario, and between the St. Lawrence and Ottawa rivers. It ripened well, and is reported to be the best crop in many years, but some fields were partially destroyed by the gale of September 14th, and others by early frosts and wet weather at the reaping season. The largest and best crops in the west were grown in the county of Norfolk.

In all parts of the Province clover was seriously injured by winter exposure and spring frosts, and the comparatively few fields that were kept for seed have produced inferior or worthless crops. The best reports come from

Essex and Kent, but even in those counties the seed is found to be small and shrunken. Elsewhere it has been almost wholly destroyed by blight and the mildew.

The root crops have been variously affected. In some districts, as in the Niagara peninsula, in the Georgian Bay counties, along the shore of Lake Ontario and in the St. Lawrence and Ottawa counties, the effects of summer droughts were felt, and the heavy rains of a later period were followed over large areas by the appearance of the potato rot. Then the potato beetle and the turnip fly were busy everywhere, and for a time the outlook was not very cheering. But the rot soon ceased to cause anxiety, and under favourable fall weather late potatoes, and especially turnips and mangolds, satisfied the most sanguine hopes of the husbandman. A larger or better crop of field roots has never been grown in the cattle-feeding counties of western Ontario.

Meagre crops of orchard fruits are the rule in all the best fruit-growing counties, and good ones are reported only from the poorest—a result partly, no doubt, of climatic causes. Vegetation is several days earlier in the western portion of the Province than in the eastern, and this year a severe frost occurred soon after the blossoming of fruit trees in the former district and before they had blossomed in the latter. But while orchards were healthy in the east, and trees made good growth, they were stricken with a blight in the west that blasted both leaf and fruit, from which they did not recover until late in the season. The cause of the blight is not well understood, although many theories are advanced, but the opinion is generally expressed that it was temporary as well as local in its character. The codling moth was also a worse pest among the apple trees than usual, and by the gale of September 14th nearly the whole of the affected fruit was blown down; in many districts a fourth of the crop was stripped off by that storm. Peaches were a small crop, owing partly to the effects of an ice-storm last winter and partly to frost at the flowering season. There was an average supply of pears in the country, and in the western counties grapes were plentiful and ripened well.

With the exception of three or four counties where local droughts prevailed pastures have been fresh and rich all the season, and live stock are reported to be healthy and in good flesh. Sales of store animals have been active for some time, and it is specially noticed that the stock of mature steers for stall feeding is much lower now than two years ago. The practice in the best grazing districts is to give cattle meal on the grass, and large numbers fitted in this way are sold to dealers in the summer and early fall. An instance of the extent of this trade is furnished by the county of Middlesex, where it is stated that more than 8,000 have been sold for export this year at an average of \$80 per head. Many farmers, however—encouraged by the high price of meat, the abundant crop of the roots and the low price of coarse grains—are buying up second and third class cattle to feed all winter for the spring markets. Hogs are scarce, but a large percentage of the whole has been shut up for fattening. A fair surplus of sheep and lambs is held in the inland counties, where there is a growing preference for Downs; in the Lake Erie and St. Lawrence counties drovers buying for the American markets always keep the supply low. Fine pastures, steady demand and good prices combined to favour the cheese industry this season, and a very large quantity has been made and exported. The butter supply is consequently below the average of former years, but it will increase as the factories close.

The bulk of this year's grain crops is no doubt in farmer's hands, and a large proportion of it is yet unthreshed. The late harvest, the sowing of fall wheat and the taking up of root crops have operated to some extent to delay marketing, but the principal reason is the lowness of prices; farmers are only selling enough to meet pressing demands. A good deal of the fall wheat threshed after harvest to make room for the spring grain and its way to market, but little has been sold since. The good quality of the barley grown in the Bay of Quinté region—where it was reaped and housed in fine condition—has induced buyers to offer good prices there. In the western counties on the other hand, where it was discoloured by rains, prices rule low, and there is reason to believe that a large part of it will be fed at home.

The Tables of Statistics show what the farmers of Ontario have done, and are doing. The total number of farms in the Province is 201,766, embracing an area of 19,602,387 acres, of which 10,211,960 acres are cleared. The value of farm land is set down at \$651,882,030, and the total of land, buildings, implements and live stock at \$882,023,400.

The area under grain crops this year was 5,002,067 acres, or 48 per cent. of all the cleared land. The acreage and production of each crop are given as follows. Fall wheat, 1,188,520 acres, 31,255,402 bushels; spring wheat, 536,817 acres, 9,665,999 bushels; barley, 848,617 acres, 24,284,407 bushels; oats, 1,375,415 acres, 50,097,997 bushels; rye, 189,031 acres, 3,549,898 bushels; peas, 557,157 acres, 10,943,357 bushels; corn, 206,924 acres, 13,420,394 bushels (in the ear); buckwheat, 49,536 acres, 1,247,943 bushels. The total of spring and fall wheat is 1,775,337

acres, yielding 40,921,401 bushels, or an average of 23.03 bushels per acre.

The produce of each kind of grain is based on the returns of threshers and the reports of correspondents—the method adopted by the Department of Agriculture at Washington and by several State Bureaus. The following table gives the average of bushels per acre this year for the Province of Ontario and for nine of the principal wheat-growing States, the figures for the latter being taken from the October Report of the United States Department of Agriculture.

	Fall Wheat	Spring Wheat	Barley	Oats	Rye
Ontario	20.3	16.5	28.0	36.4	18.8
Ohio	16.7	19.0	28.0	28.0	15.8
Michigan	17.8	25.2	33.3	17.0	
Indiana	15.7	24.0	27.0	16.1	
Illinois	16.0	22.5	37.4	16.6	
Missouri	14.0	23.0	34.5	15.5	
Kansas	19.5	25.7	38.1	22.3	
Iowa	11.0	21.7	31.8	14.3	
Minnesota	13.3	23.3	40.0	18.0	
Dakota	16.7	29.2	45.0	20.0	

It is only necessary to add that in the American States the grain crops are regarded as exceptionally good this year. The comparison of averages therefore makes a remarkably good showing for Ontario.

The total produce of beans is computed to be 409,910 bushels; of potatoes, 18,432,145 bushels; of mangold wurtzels, 7,711,420 bushels; of carrots, 4,009,975 bushels; and of turnips, 35,359,341 bushels. The area under meadow and clover was 1,823,890 acres, and the produce 2,090,626 tons, being an average of only 1.14 tons per acre. The damage done to clover by winter exposure and spring frosts accounts for this poor result. Orchard and garden embrace an area of 213,846 acres, and vineyard 2,098 acres. The returns for the latter are doubtless imperfect.

The tables of live stock show that the number of farm horses in the Province on the 31st of May was 503,604; of cattle, 1,586,312; of sheep, 1,915,303; of hogs, 850,226; and of poultry, 5,352,120. The number of milch cows was 665,382, and of thoroughbred cattle, 23,629; the returns of the latter, however, were incomplete. Of sheep one year and over 933,143 were returned as coarse-woolled, and 178,299 as fine-woolled; the average weight per fleece of coarse wool was 5.19 lbs., and of fine wool 5.13 lbs. The number of hogs one year and over was 232,415, and under one year 597,811. The number of turkeys was 310,058; of geese, 533,357, and of other fowls, 4,508,705.

A large breadth of fall wheat has been sown, but it was got in late and much of the ground was in poor condition. The rains of August prolonged the harvesting season, and farmers were not able to give the usual care to fallows. Besides, as an increased acreage almost invariably follows a good crop, quantities of indifferently tilled and manured stubble land have been pressed into service. In many parts of the country—especially in the western counties—the ground was hard to work, owing to the drought of September, and some fields were sown as late as the 20th of October. The young plant has in these districts made slow growth, for want of stimulating rains, and has neither rooted nor tillered well; yet it looks healthy and has a fairly promising appearance. In the eastern counties, where the September rainfall was greater, the land was in good tilth and the crop is in fine condition. A few reports make mention of injury done by the Hessian fly, the wire-worm and the white grub, but it has been in no instance serious.

It appears from the reports of correspondents that much attention is being paid to underdraining and to manuring the soil. The value of drainage has been strongly enforced by the experience of this year, and in many sections the work is only limited by the scarcity of labour and of tiles. Large quantities of salt and plaster are used on grain, root and grass crops, but there is a growing opinion that the best way to keep up the strength of the land is to increase the manure heap,—which means, to quote the remark of a Wellington correspondent, that "there is nothing like plenty beef and mutton to the acre." Salt is less used as a fertilizer this year for the reason that manufacturers have doubled the price, and phosphates are generally used in limited quantities only by way of experiment.

Slow progress has been made with fall ploughing, the ground being generally too hard and dry; but the prolonged season has been a boon to all who were behind with this important work.

MORE than half the newspapers in the world are printed in the English language.

IN Bristol and Clifton, England, nearly 9,000 persons have signed requests to the local postmaster that their own letters may be retained at the post office during the Sabbath. This has so far diminished the work of the letter-carriers that every other Sunday they are permitted to be "off duty."