

The Commercial

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U. S. WHEAT CROP.

The October crop report of the United States bureau of agriculture, has renewed interest in the statistical situation of wheat. The crop report places the average yield of spring wheat at a little over ten bushels per acre, and of winter wheat at twelve bushels per acre. The average is for the United States as a whole. Oregon gives the highest yield of winter wheat of any individual state, the yield being a fraction over 16 bushels per acre. Michigan, Maryland and New York come next, with slightly over 14 bushels per acre. The lowest yield is in Virginia, with 8.7 bushels per acre. Spring wheat averages are:—Wisconsin, 11.8; Minnesota, 8.7; Iowa, 10.3; Nebraska, 10.8; Colorado, 17.5; Dakota, 9.2; Montana, 16.5; Washington, 18.5; Utah, 16.3. Spring wheat for New England States ranges from 14 to 16 bushels.

According to the official report, winter wheat is yielding more per acre than was expected, whilst the opposite is true of spring wheat. The official figures, however, are not accepted as altogether satisfactory by some authorities. The official returns would make the entire wheat crop of the United States amount to about 137,000,000 bushels of spring wheat, and 268,000,000 bushels of winter wheat, as compared with a spring wheat crop last year of 163,000,000 bushels and 293,000,000 of winter wheat, or an apparent total shortage this year of both winter and spring wheat, of about 50,000,000 bushels. Allowance, however, must be made for the weight of the grain per bushel, the figures given being measured bushels. Last year wheat averaged 58.5 pounds to the bushel, but the crop this year is said to be much lighter, and it is estimated will not average over 56 pounds to the bushel. The *Cincinnati Price Current* places the yield this year at considerably lower figures than the official report would indicate. The *Price Current* places the total yield of spring wheat at 130,000,000 bushels, and of winter wheat at 255,000,000 bushels, or a shortage as compared with last year of 71,000,000 bushels.

On the basis of last year's weight, the official report would indicate a total yield of 390,000,000 bushels for the crop of 1888. Of this total about 60,000,000

bushels are credited to the Pacific States, leaving 330,000,000 bushels for the country east of the mountains. Home requirements are placed at 340,000,000 bushels, including both coasts, leaving an export surplus of say 50,000,000 bushels from the present crop. Of this surplus 40,000,000 bushels would belong to the Pacific coast and only 10,000,000 bushels to the Atlantic coast. By reducing reserves to a very low point, the surplus available for export from the Atlantic coast might be increased by about 15,000,000 bushels of old wheat, giving a total surplus of 25,000,000 bushels for the Atlantic coast, and a grand total for both coasts of 60,000,000 to 65,000,000 bushels. Of the surplus available for the Atlantic coast, about 15,000,000 bushels have already gone out, so that but 10,000,000 bushels are now available for export from this coast, without drawing upon supplies necessary for domestic purposes. This would only leave about four or five weeks' average exports yet to be moved out from Atlantic ports. If this calculation is correct, there is danger that the exportation of wheat from the country may be overdone, and that the country will be verging on a wheat famine before another crop comes in.

EVIDENCES OF PROSPERITY.

Evidences of substantial progress and prosperity are not wanting in Manitoba and the Territories. Matters of more or less importance are continually coming up, which show that the country is steadily improving, and that the inhabitants are rapidly becoming independent for subsistence upon the results of a single harvest. Though a few individuals have not been successful in their agricultural operations the past season, yet no cases of distress have so far been reported. When it is remembered that in this new country the bulk of our population has come in during the past few years, and that the great majority have arrived here with their financial resources about nil, the present solid condition of the country is certainly most satisfactory. Men who arrived here a few years ago with only enough ready cash to pay a few weeks' board, are now comfortably located on prairie farms. They may not have all the conveniences to be found on an old homestead in Ontario, but they are nevertheless fairly comfortable, and above all, contented and prosperous. They are well supplied with machinery necessary for

the cultivation of their farms, have gathered quite a little herd of live stock around them, and have buildings which answer for present requirements. This season the sales of lumber to farmers all over the country have been very heavy. The mills have been kept working to their utmost capacity to supply the demand, and as a rule have been away behind with their orders all summer. This would indicate that farmers have been building extensively during the past summer. Indeed, it is known that already a great many of our settlers have replaced their first habitations, put up on their arrival here, by more commodious and comfortable houses. Granaries and barns are also being added to the farm buildings. This certainly speaks of prosperity among our farmers. Last fall and winter the liabilities of our agricultural population to the implement companies were almost wholly cleared off, and sales made during the past spring and summer were for about one half cash. Already orders are being taken freely for machinery to be delivered next season. One country agent reports orders in for about twenty binders for next season. The amount of new land broken this summer, which will be in crop next year, is undoubtedly vastly in excess of last year. Liabilities of farmers to the loan companies have also been greatly reduced, and altogether the country was never on a more solid and prosperous basis than it is at present.

Of course there are a few settlers who have not succeeded as farmers in this country, but these exceptions only prove the rule. There will always be some who, from misfortunes, avoidable or unavoidable, lack of practical knowledge, etc., will fail. Some men would fail to make a decent living were they placed in a veritable Garden of Eden. But taking the people as a whole, there is certainly every reason to feel satisfied with the degree of prosperity now prevailing. Where such satisfactory results have been brought about in so short a time, the natural advantages afforded by the country must be very great.

In considering the present condition of our agricultural population, it must also be borne in mind that a large number of the settlers in this country came from foreign lands. They were unacquainted with the manners and customs of the country, and the modes followed in successful agriculture, consequently they had a great deal to learn after their arrival.