

Conditions in the West

By E. CORA HIND.

Attention in the West is mainly centred on the Victory Loan and the Election campaign. Both are being favored by superbly fine weather, almost as warm as the middle of September.

I was at Regina during the week, and threshing and plowing are going forward actively in many of the sections, and should the present fine weather continue for another ten days, the amount of Fall plowing will be fully equal to that of any ordinary year, and possibly greater.

In the districts where potatoes were in the ground during the severe October frosts, they are now being dug and many of them are found to be entirely unhurt; although the percentage of frozen potatoes, is, nevertheless, heavy. In the eastern portion of the Province, 23% of the potato crop was frozen. In the Southwest district the average of good potatoes dug, will not be above sixty bushels for each acre planted, while in the northern district, which is a heavy potato producer, about 30 to 35% of the crop appears to be damaged by frost, and the average yield before the frost was estimated at 125 bushels to the acre. In the central-western districts of the Province, about 25% of the potatoes were undug when the frost came, and these are practically a total loss. It will be seen from these figures that the potato situation in Manitoba is very far from rosy. Alberta has fared much better, and it is estimated will have considerably more than a million bushels of a surplus, after allowing for any damage that has taken place and shipments already made.

LIVESTOCK.

The forward movement of livestock continues extremely heavy, especially at the Winnipeg yards, and in view of the large receipts, prices are remaining very steady, top steers selling for \$11. Hogs have again advanced and are quoted at \$16.00. Calgary yards also report a very heavy run of stock, mainly the ordinary butchering cattle, which will bring \$8 to \$9.00 per hundred weight. From both Calgary and Winnipeg the move of feeder cattle and young heifers back to the land is very encouraging.

One of the events of the week among livestock men was the annual gathering of the Western Canada Livestock Union. This is a sort of grand executive of all the livestock interest both commercial and pure bred of the four Provinces. It met this year at Regina, and was the occasion of a very earnest appeal for greater production. This was made by J. D. McGregor of Brandon, on behalf of Food Controller Hanna. It was quite evident that the tone of the meeting was generally in favor of production, but the two great questions of food and labor supplies, were regarded as very serious handicaps and were discussed at very great length. Finally, on the labor question the following resolution was passed unanimously:

"Resolved, that in view of the vital importance to the Empire of increasing and maintaining at the highest possible level the food production capabilities of the Dominion, the Western Canada Livestock Union desires to respectfully impress upon the Dominion Government the imperative necessity of instructing military registrars and exemption tribunals to exercise every possible precaution in order to avoid the drafting of farmers' sons, young farmers and bona-fide experienced farm laborers, whether applying for exemption or not, whose removal would seriously interfere with the conduct of agricultural operations.

"In this connection, it is suggested that steps should be taken to secure the utilization in agricultural work by conscription or otherwise to a far greater extent than hitherto of the alien labor, now largely unavailable and often unsatisfactory. And that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Government at Ottawa at once."

In connection with the question of feeds, a resolution on screenings, passed by the conference of production at Ottawa, was practically adopted as the view of this meeting;—namely, that the Dominion Government will be asked to take over the entire output of screenings from the terminal elevators on a cash basis for services rendered in cleaning, and that the factors in determining the price paid the shippers of grain be: The composition of the screenings; the export value of the refuse screenings; and market

value of re-cleaned screenings to be arrived at on a basis of the market value of No. 1 C. W. oats Fort William.

Another resolution passed was one to express to the Federal Government the desirability of the immediate removal of the war tax on corn and other feed stuffs entering Canada.

During the session a telegram was received from the food controller stating that he had received word from Julius Barnes of the Corn Exchange office, New York, that as soon as the new corn crop has come forward sufficiently to cover needs, the war trade board will alter the present license regulations.

The Provincial Government of Manitoba at a session of the cabinet held on Tuesday, decided to increase the number of hogs kept on all the farms in connection with the Provincial Government institutions. This would include the Agricultural college, the various asylums, reformatories and gaol farms. The plan will be to buy suitable sows, which are being offered on the Winnipeg market, and send them to the farms for breeding.

William Fares on the firm of Lane & Fares, extensive ranchers in Alberta and Saskatchewan, has undertaken personally to see that on their various farms, and farms adjacent to them, that at least 1,000 additional sows will be bred within the next six weeks.

ENGLISH DYE OUTPUT EXPANDING RAPIDLY.

Conditions in the dye industry are discussed in the annual report of the board of directors of British Dyes, Ltd., which says:

"The production of dyes continues to be limited by the shortage, caused by the war, of certain materials; but notwithstanding this, the supply throughout the year has been increased, and the variety of dyes extended. An extensive plant for the production of Azo colors has been completed, and is now in operation. The range of direct cotton colors has been supplemented by the inclusion of a yellow, violet, and green. The supply of wool colors of this type has been enlarged. The production of methylene blue has been largely increased, and the output of mordant colors of the type of khaki yellow, green and brown is now sufficient to meet the demands made upon the company for dyestuffs used in the manufacture of the varied clothing equipment of our own and allied troops. Among the vat dyes of the indanthrene type a blue and yellow are being produced. It is hoped shortly to extend the range of these colors.

"The company has produced a color similar to the alizarine blue dyestuff for wool of exceptional fastness to the action of light. The requirements of the Government for dyes for a variety of military purposes have been fully met, and this demand has to some extent necessarily interfered with the regularity of supplies to the trade. Important installations for the manufacture of intermediate products, including paranitraniline and betanaphthol, have been completed. Plants for the manufacture of other products are being proceeded with as rapidly as possible, and as these come into operation they will provide materials from which the variety as well as the quantity of colors manufactured can be augmented.

"In addition to the plant referred to, the following important work, as well as much minor work, has been carried out: (1) The construction of the works railway and its branches has been well advanced toward completion. (2) A number of large new sheds for the manufacture of intermediate products and colors have been completed. (3) The electrical installation has been completed, and both the old and the new works are now entirely operated by the company's own plant. (4) A power gas plant has been completed and is in operation. (5) A water service reservoir, with a capacity of 2,000,000 gallons, has been constructed. (6) A pipe system for the distribution of gas, steam and compressed air throughout the works is approaching completion.

"The work of the Research Department has received a great deal of attention during the year, and increased facilities for laboratory and experimental work have been provided. As soon as arrangements can be made for the supply of labor and materials, the construction of the main Research Laboratory at Huddersfield, will be commenced, the plans having already been prepared. In the meantime, research

PRICE OF BUTTER NOT JUSTIFIED.

In his monthly report on food commodities, Mr. W. F. O'Connor, acting Commissioner on the Cost of Living, covering the amount of food held in cold storage on November 1st, comments on the steady accumulation of butter.

October figures as to butter in storage showed a 24 per cent increase, as compared with a year ago. The Commissioner says: "It is difficult to appreciate either the reason or necessity for this." He points out that butter is not a seasonal commodity, and the realizable export is not abnormal. In his opinion the ruling price of butter is unnaturally high, and is held up, to some extent at least, by means of unjustifiable accumulation.

"The price of butter," says the Commissioner, "should decline. The conditions do not justify the present price and, under the terms of Order-in-Council of November 10th, 1916, offers of reasonable prices therefore to those holding undue quantities cannot be refused without risk of offence against the terms of that Order-in-Council."

Dissatisfaction is also expressed by the Commissioner with regard to the egg situation. He points out that the increase of holdings is only four per cent, but the circumstances are peculiar. Exports, as shown by the Department of Customs for October, decreased from 1,574,034 dozen in 1916 to 951,134 dozen in 1917. "There is," says the Commissioner, "notoriously an absence of opportunity to ship which has resulted in a falling off of demand. Perishable stocks are being held, notwithstanding. It would seem that plain business prudence would dictate the placing of these egg stocks in the Canadian market at once, otherwise there is likely to be a serious loss of valuable food."

The Commissioner explains that the holdings of the firms reporting quantities of food commodities on hand November 1st, 1917, who also have reported for November 1st, 1916, show the following comparisons:

	Nov. 1, 1916.	Nov. 1, 1917.	Per cent.
Eggs	8,012,681	8,344,958	4 inc.
Butter	9,467,994	12,709,721	34 inc.
Cheese	10,706,386	9,332,547	13 dec.
Beef	23,760,093	25,705,467	8 inc.
Pork	5,130,433	5,159,928	6 inc.
Bacon and Ham	18,563,417	17,469,527	6 dec.
Mutton and Lamb . . .	2,203,074	2,000,886	9.1 dec.
Fish	10,511,671	10,531,454	.2 inc.

work on behalf of the company is being carried on at the Universities of Oxford, Leeds and Liverpool.

"The question of co-operation among dye manufacturers has been engaging the attention of the Board of Trade throughout the year, but they have not yet taken any definite steps in this direction. The directors have throughout maintained the attitude that they will welcome any tangible proposals for co-operation with other manufacturers, provided that the interests of the textile and other industries dependent on the supply of dyes are safeguarded, and that the co-operation can be carried into effect in a manner consistent with the object for which the company was established.

"The directors would again emphasize the fact that before dye-making can be established as a national industry in this country it is necessary to put down plant to manufacture intermediate products, and the provision of plant for this purpose has largely devolved on the company. While a great deal has been accomplished, with limited means and under difficult conditions, in producing dyes to satisfy immediate needs and in laying the foundations of the industry, it should be clearly recognized that not much more than a beginning has been effected up to the present, and great efforts have yet to be made. The supply of materials, plant, labor, qualified chemists, and of capital must be very largely increased.

"The need for the employment of greatly increased capital is emphasized by the fact that the recently published accounts of five of the German dye manufacturing firms show assets which amount in the aggregate to upward of £35,000,000 sterling, including cash resources of approximately £10,000,000 sterling.

"The issued share and loan capital of the company as of April 30, 1917, consisted of: Share capital subscribed (942,069 shares of £1 each, 15s per share called up), £942,069; loan from Government, £1,142,069, making a total of £2,084,138."

"The directors report that they feel justified in recommending the payment of a dividend at the rate of 6 per cent per annum, which is the maximum amount allowed."

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