

**CONDITIONS IN THE WEST.**

By MISS E. CORA HIND.

Since last writing, two of the large annual bull sales have been held, one at Brandon on March 7th and one at Regina on March 14th and 15th. Prices at Brandon touched new high water marks both for individual sales and the average. \$770, was the highest price paid for a bull at Brandon and while no individual brought that amount at Regina, the average for the sale of 94 bulls was \$292, or \$42, higher than the average at Brandon. Several contributors averaged as high as \$432.50 for a number of bulls.

At Calgary next month, 500 bulls will be offered and there will be a large number also offered at Edmonton and Medicine Hat and it is expected that there will be no difficulty in securing buyers for all that are offered. Some idea of the extent to which the West is going in for high priced livestock, may be gathered from the fact that the recent sale of Hereford cattle of O. Harris & Sons, Harris, Mo., the highest priced bull and highest priced cow were bought by Frank Collicut one of the best known Hereford cattle of O. Harris & Sons, Harris, Missouri, brought \$11,900, while Miss Perfection 9th with a bull calf at foot brought \$4,025. "Nothing is too good for the West" appears to be the motto of a number of our breeders.

**LATE SPRING.**

The spring is undeniably late. We have passed the middle of March and Saskatchewan and Manitoba are still deeply covered with snow, and while the sun is bright and increasing in strength, there is, day after day, an exceedingly shrewd air.

Alberta has been favored with one or two chinooks and their snow has, in a great measure, disappeared, particularly in the south and centre, but even two weeks of the best of weather would hardly put the land in a condition for getting on it. If the amount of fall plowing were large this would not be so serious, but with the small amount of land at present prepared, this means late seeding.

Attendance at many farmers gatherings has convinced the writer that in spite of all the talk, the prairie farmers are pretty well determined that they will not venture wheat on anything but prepared land. They will seed heavily to oats, barley and flax, because there will be time to prepare the land for these crops, but the British government will need to offer something very much more enticing than \$1.30 per bushel to induce them to embark on the expense of heavy seeding to wheat where the cultivation is doubtful. There will, no doubt, be sufficient seeded to give a handsome surplus for exporting, but there is very little likelihood of any increase in the acreage over last year, and it would not be surprising if there were a very material decrease.

**81,007,539 POUNDS OF COTTON IN EXPLOSIVES.**

During the three months ended December 31, 1916, there were 81,007,539 pounds of bleached cotton fibres, including linters and hull fibre, consumed in the United States in the manufacture of gun-cotton and explosives of all kinds. This quantity was equivalent to 162,015 bales of 500 pounds each and compares with 133,982 bales, 142,725 bales and 144,988 bales for the quarters ending September 30, June 30 and March 31, respectively. There were 533,710 bales of bleached cotton fibre consumed in the manufacture of explosives during 1916 and 244,003 bales during 1915. The quantity of bleached cotton fibre held in establishments engaged in this manufacture of December 31 amounted to 9,876,772 pounds, equivalent to 19,754 bales.

The loss in preparing linters and hull fibre from the wrapped and iron-bound bale to the purified material, as used in nitration, is from 30 to 40 per cent depending on the condition of the raw fibre, some stock being quite clean and some very trashy. Based on an average loss of 35 per cent the gross weight of unbleached cotton fibre used in the manufacture of explosives during the three months ended December 31 was 249,254, equivalent 500-pound bales, and during 1916, 898,015 bales.

There was a sound of breaking glass heard in the drawing-room, and the following dialogue ensued:

"James, have you broken another glass?"  
 "Yes, madam; but I was very fortunate this time. It only broke in two pieces."

"Well, and you call that being 'fortunate,' do you?"  
 "Yes, madam; you can't imagine what a bother it is to pick them up when they break into a hundred pieces."—Pearson

**WESTERN Assurance Company**  
 INCORPORATED A.D. 1851  
**Fire, Marine & Explosion Insurance**  
 Head Office, corner Scott & Wellington Sts., Toronto

**STATEMENT AS OF DECEMBER 31st, 1916.**

|  |                |                 |
|--|----------------|-----------------|
| Fire Premiums for 1916                       | \$2,338,452.12 |                 |
| Marine Premiums for 1916                     | 2,583,725.57   |                 |
| Interest and Rents                           |                | \$4,922,177.69  |
|  |                | 118,942.78      |
|  |                | \$5,041,120.47  |
| Fire Losses                                  | \$1,242,529.97 |                 |
| Agents' Commissions                          | 481,608.07     |                 |
| Taxes  | 79,429.96      |                 |
| General Expenses                             | 386,437.77     |                 |
|  | \$2,189,905.77 |                 |
| Marine Losses                                | \$1,824,219.92 |                 |
| Agents' Commissions                          | 313,894.40     |                 |
| Taxes  | 33,819.23      |                 |
| General Expenses                             | 105,870.43     |                 |
|  | 2,277,803.98   |                 |
|  |                | 4,467,709.75    |
| PROFIT FOR THE YEAR                          |                | \$ 573,410.72   |
| Total Assets at 31st December, 1916          |                | \$ 5,056,592.72 |
| Losses paid since organization in 1851, over |                | \$66,000,000.00 |

**BOARD AT LONDON, ENG.**

RT. HON. SIR JOHN KENNAWAY, Bart., C.B., Chairman  
 SIR ERNEST CABLE ALFRED COOPER SIR CHARLES JOHNSTON, Bart.  
**OFFICERS.**  
 W. B. MEIKLE, General Manager C. C. FOSTER, Secretary  
 JOHN SIMS, Assistant General Manager

**2,573 MERCHANT VESSELS DESTROYED IN WAR.**

Merchant vessels destroyed by war causes in February, so far as definitely reported in New York, numbered 202, with an aggregate gross tonnage of approximately 420,460, according to a carefully compiled record kept by The New York Journal of Commerce and based upon information from all reliable sources. This total includes only losses where the name of the vessel has been reported. It does not include the tonnage conceded to have been destroyed by Sir Edward Carson in a statement that gave no details as to the identity of ships destroyed. Furthermore, it does not include ships claimed to have been sunk by Germany unless the name of the vessel is specifically stated. In general, the reports issuing from Berlin refer to unidentified ships, stating only flag and tonnage.

Later reports may add very considerably to the February total, which now stands as the high record for a single month. Such addition would appear very probable in view of the losses claimed by Berlin and admitted by Great Britain in excess of The New York Journal of Commerce figures. While the total is only approximate, the experience of other months would indicate that when all reports are in the aggregate losses for February should be well under 500,000 tons. This contrasts with a rate of 1,000,000 tons a month, predicted by Germany at the time of the resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare and the establishment of the barred zone.

The destruction last month brings the total shipping lost since the opening of hostilities in 1914 to 2,573 vessels of 4,811,100 gross tons. This represents about 10 per cent of the world's merchant marine at the beginning of the war, but new construction has offset most of the loss. British losses constitute something more than half of the whole amount of tonnage destroyed, while Norway has suffered most severely of other nations.

The failure of the German submarine campaign is shown by a comparison of the losses reported during January and those which occurred last month. The January record shows the destruction of 164 vessels of 338,551 gross tons, or less than 100,000 tons under the February total. A feature of the record for February was the sinking of two American ships and the destruction of a Peruvian vessel. The following table shows the number of ships and the amount of tonnage represented by them lost by each nation during February, compared with losses during January.

|           | —January— |           | —February— |           |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|
|           | No.       | Gr. tons. | No.        | Gr. tons. |
| British   | 58        | 189,891   | 119        | 256,550   |
| Norwegian | 27        | 55,023    | 23         | 45,282    |

|               |    |        |    |        |
|---------------|----|--------|----|--------|
| Dutch         | 2  | 6,710  | 12 | 42,409 |
| French        | 25 | 23,462 | 8  | 22,760 |
| Italian       |    |        | 8  | 13,415 |
| Spanish       | 5  | 9,979  | 7  | 10,122 |
| Russian       | 3  | 5,213  | 5  | 8,404  |
| Swedish       | 8  | 11,829 | 3  | 5,959  |
| Danish        | 13 | 13,539 | 2  | 4,501  |
| United States | 4  |        | 2  | 4,443  |
| Belgian       | 1  | 199    | 3  | 3,028  |
| Greek         | 6  | 15,487 | 3  | 2,168  |
| Peruvian      |    |        | 1  | 1,419  |
| Portuguese    | 2  | 1,802  |    |        |
| Japanese      | 2  | 5,180  |    |        |
| Austrian      | 1  | 537    |    |        |

In the following table are shown the respective losses since the beginning of the war of the Allied nations, the neutral countries and the Teutonic Powers:

**Losses of the Allies.**

|               | No.   | Gross Tons. |
|---------------|-------|-------------|
| Great Britain | 1,276 | 2,821,849   |
| France        | 164   | 294,338     |
| Italy         | 121   | 225,114     |
| Russia        | 64    | 77,803      |
| Japan         | 9     | 31,904      |
| Belgium       | 16    | 23,683      |
| Portugal      | 9     | 10,879      |
| Rumania       | 1     | 3,688       |
| Canada        | 1     | 3,464       |
| Total         | 1,661 | 3,492,772   |

**Losses of the Neutrals.**

|               |     |           |
|---------------|-----|-----------|
| Norway        | 340 | 464,569   |
| Holland       | 68  | 165,146   |
| Denmark       | 96  | 101,475   |
| Greece        | 52  | 100,972   |
| Sweden        | 97  | 95,332    |
| Spain         | 35  | 64,607    |
| United States | 12  | 29,001    |
| Brazil        | 1   | 2,258     |
| Peru          | 1   | 1,419     |
| Total         | 702 | 1,024,770 |

**Losses of the Teutons.**

|                 |     |         |
|-----------------|-----|---------|
| Germany         | 83  | 195,887 |
| Turkey          | 101 | 55,282  |
| Austria-Hungary | 11  | 22,439  |
| Total           | 195 | 293,608 |

There was no addition to the Teutonic losses, which now represent only about five per cent of the total destruction. The losses of the Allies and neutrals are, respectively, about 75 and 20 per cent of the whole.