

# THE COMMERCIAL

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Publisher.

The Commercial certainly enjoys a very much larger circulation among the business community of the vast region lying between Lake Superior and the Pacific Coast, than any other paper in Canada, daily or weekly. The Commercial also reaches the leading wholesale, commission, manufacturing and financial houses of Eastern Canada.

WINNIPEG, SEPTEMBER 17, 1896.

## Ontario Crops.

Following is a summary of the official crop bulletin, issued by the provincial government:

**Fall wheat.**—The crop of fall wheat is one of the best ever harvested in the province. Both east and west the yields have been large. The grain is described as being plump, and in many cases goes considerably over standard weight.

**Spring wheat.**—Many correspondents in the eastern portion of the province report a considerable increase in the acreage devoted to spring wheat. The yield as a whole will be considerably above the average.

**Barley.**—The crop is generally good, and with a few exceptions the grain is bright and in fine condition.

**Oats.**—There will be about an average yield of oats as regards quantity, the crop, which promised splendidly during the earlier part of the season, having suffered considerably from late frosts, and to a still greater degree from the hot, dry weather, which caused premature ripening.

**Peas.**—The frost of July 10th also did considerable injury to this crop. The straw though short is bright, and will make good fodder. The yield per acre for the province will fall short of the average, and runs all the way from ten to thirty bushels to the acre.

**Hay and clover.**—Correspondents are almost unanimous in favorable comments regarding this crop. Three tons to the acre are frequently reported, and four or five tons per acre are also mentioned. The yield will be about one-third above the average. Many farmers cannot find room in their barns for the surplus crop. In addition to the generous yield the crop generally has been saved in first-class

condition. Alsike did not do so well as red clover or timothy, and there will be a remarkable scarcity of seed in the case of this variety.

**Corn.**—This promises to be a fair crop in the Lake Erie counties, but in the other districts much injury has been done by the frost of the second week of July.

**Potatoes.**—The potato crop will be considerably below the average in most localities owing to the late frosts in June and July, which were very destructive in the northern districts.

**Roots.**—The large majority of reports as to the root crops are encouraging.

**Flax.**—Owing to a number of flax mills having closed down during the last two years the acreage of flax has fallen off greatly. The crop will be only middling in quality.

**Tobacco.**—The counties of Essex and Kent have been experiencing a boom this year in the growing of tobacco. A large area has been given to the crop, and although the early part of the season was too dry for best results the plants in many cases are quite promising.

**Fruit.**—The apple harvest will be a light one this season, the yield in most localities being considerably below the average. This is attributable among other causes to heavy rain storms occurring while the trees were in bloom, which interfered with fertilization, and to the prevalence of the tent caterpillar and other destructive insects which have wrought much damage where spraying has been neglected. Much of the fruit is small and hard owing to the drouth. Winter apples will be particularly scarce. Plums will be below the average. Peaches as a rule have done poorly, and the crop will be small. Pears have been the most successful of the larger fruits, and are likely to be abundant. Grapes will be plentiful. The drouth proved injurious to small fruits. Raspberries were small and dry.

The yield of the principal crops is estimated as follows: Winter wheat, 24.1 bushels per acre. Spring wheat 17.3; barley, 27.5; oats, 34.6; peas, 18.1 bushels per acre.

## Results of Careful Farming.

Speaking of his recent western trip Dr. Saunders, director of the Dominion experimental farms said:

"The crops at the Experimental farm at Brandon are very good. The wheat there is expected to average 30 bushels to the acre. Oats which are estimated in the provincial crop bulletin at an average of 35.92 bushels per acre are expected to give from 75 to 80 bushels per acre, at the farm; and barley, which is estimated to average 29.17 for the province in general, will, it is believed, average 40 bushels per acre on the farm. The reason why the crops on the experimental farm exceed the average farmers' generally, are that the land is more thoroughly prepared, the seed got in in good time, and the weeds kept under. No fertilizers are applied to the cereal crops, either at Brandon or Indian Head, and the quality of the soil on the experimental farms does not average better than that on most of the other good farms surrounding them."

The results attained at the experimental farm, as shown by Dr. Saunders' remarks, indicate what may be accomplished by careful and skillful farming, even in an unfavorable season. The district in which the Mani-

toba branch farm is situated, was not favored with as good weather for the crops this year as many other parts of the province, owing to spring drouth, yet we find that the crops have returned a much heavier yield than the average yield for the most favored districts. Of course many farmers have not the implements and other conveniences which are enjoyed at the experimental farm. At the same time the average yield of crops could not be vastly increased, with the means at the command of the average farmer, by the exercise of more thought and greater care in conducting the work of the farm.

## Mountain Fruit Farms.

The Dominion government branch experimental farm at Agassiz in British Columbia is proving instrumental in showing that much of the rough, mountain-side land, usually considered almost useless, may be used to good advantage for fruit-growing. Four orchards, Dr. Saunders tells us, have been planted on the side of a mountain at the back of the farm, at different heights from 150 to 1,100 feet above the valley, and they continue to give excellent results. About 900 trees are now growing in these orchards, including some of the most promising varieties of apples, pears, plums, cherries and peaches, and the trees continue to manifest remarkable health, and the foliage and fruit are much less liable to injury from parasitic fungi than those growing on the valley level, the fruit being remarkably clean and free from spot. The usefulness of the land in such situations for orchard purposes having now been demonstrated, many farmers are following the example set by the experimental farm, and are utilizing these hitherto waste spots by converting them into orchards.

## Shoes and Leather.

The Commercial recently referred to the increased cost of shoes owing to the advance in leather. The Canadian Shoe and Leather Journal has the following on the same subject:

There has been nothing like this advance in shoes warranted even by the leather market. How manufacturers can continue making goods at the figures quoted to-day is a mystery to those who know the leather market, that can only be explained by the introduction of inferior materials or methods. The note of warning uttered in these columns a few months ago in regard to the trash that was being introduced into shoe bottoms was not fruitless, and caused more or less consternation amongst those who were endeavoring to get square with the rising market by such nefarious practices. There are still those who make paper and leather composition do service for the solid article, and this is what contributes so largely to keep the market in the condition it is. Solid leather goods cannot be made at the prices that were obtained a few months ago, and which are quoted to-day by concerns who are not supplying a genuine article. Profits were close enough when leather was lower, and any one can judge that there must be a screw loose if the quotations in shoes are maintained at old figures. Hides and leather have shown a capacity for stability that has not characterized their products for some years, and even the doubtful ones have begun to realize that the prevailing high prices