

CHAPTER VII.

AGRICULTURE.

327. Canada is essentially an agricultural country, and in spite of the extensive mineral resources which are waiting for development, the agricultural industry must always be the most important one, for while the value of imports and exports of animal and agricultural produce may be exceeded by that of other industries, the number of persons depending on agriculture for a livelihood far exceeds the number depending on any other pursuit. The agricultural industry.

328. The crops in 1888 in Ontario and Manitoba, the two great grain-growing Provinces of the Dominion, were fairly good. The dry, cold weather in the spring severely affected the fall wheat in Ontario, and reduced the quantity, but the ripening season was so favourable that the quality was good. Spring wheat was a superior crop, and above the average of seven years. The total wheat crop in this Province was placed at 20,284,346 bushels. Oats, barley and peas were about an average crop in each case; from some places, however, returns of heavy crops were made—oats as high as 70 bushels, barley 38 bushels, and peas 30 bushels per acre. Root crops were generally good. Crops in Ontario, 1888.

329. In Manitoba the prospects of a harvest exceeding in richness the harvest of 1887 were, during the summer, exceedingly good, but unfortunately an early autumn frost touched the grain more or less over a large area, and its value was correspondingly depreciated. The rise in the price of wheat, however, tended very considerably to reduce the loss to the farmers, the average price ranging from 75 cents to 80 cents per bushel, while in 1887 the average was 55 cents per bushel. No complete returns of the wheat crop are available, but the following estimate, which has been kindly furnished by Mr. C. N. Bell, the Secretary of the Board of Trade at Winnipeg, is probably about as correct as it will be Crops in Manitoba, 1888.