

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

GRAIN STATISTICS.

Tables 45 to 49 give the principal statistics relating to the storage, inspection, grading and shipment of Canadian grain. The trade is regulated by the Dominion Government under The Canada Grain Act, 1912 (2 Geo. V, c. 27)¹. Probably no country in the world possesses a system for the sale and shipment of its grain products so complete and elaborate as is that of Canada. In this system the grain elevator plays an important part. Few grain growers, especially those of the prairie provinces, have anything like adequate storage facilities, and the grain, as produced, is moved through a series of public elevators and warehouses, as well as over loading platforms, until finally placed in the holds of ocean-going vessels. In the fiscal year 1914-15 the total storage capacity of the 2,841 grain elevators and warehouses in Canada was 168,624,000 bushels, these figures representing an increase from a total of 523 elevators and warehouses with a capacity of 18,329,352 bushels in 1900-01. For the purposes of grain shipment the country is divided into the eastern and western inspection divisions, the former comprising that portion of Ontario lying east of Port Arthur, and Quebec and the Maritime provinces; whilst the latter comprises the Northwest provinces and territories, British Columbia and that portion of Ontario lying west of and including the city of Port Arthur.

Shipment of Canadian Grain.—When grain was first shipped from western Canada it was hauled by the farmer, either loose or in sacks, to flat warehouses or simple wooden storehouses, built by grain dealers along the railway line. Elevators were introduced shortly after the year 1880. They were designed to take advantage of the flowing property of grain in bulk, and their equipment enabled the grain to be handled much more easily than was possible with the primitive warehouse. They have grown rapidly in number, whilst the old flat warehouse has practically disappeared. Dissatisfaction with the elevators on the part of farmers resulted in the introduction of what are called "loading platforms." The loading platform is a wooden structure on a siding, on to which a farmer can drive his team and from which he can shovel the grain into the car. There are now in existence some 1,600 loading platforms, and applications for new or larger ones are constantly received. Probably about one-third of the total western grain crop is loaded over these platforms.

Grain Elevators.—As a general rule the elevators are owned and operated by commercial companies or farmers' co-operative companies. When the farmer takes his grain to an elevator he can either sell the grain to the operator, in which case it is called "street grain," or he can hire a bin in the elevator to keep his grain distinct from all other grain, in which case it is called "special binned grain," or he can store it with other grain of the same grade. If he stores the grain either in a special or general bin, he arranges with the railway company for a car, and the elevator loads the grain into the car to his order. When the grain is loaded he can either sell it on the spot as track grain, or send it forward consigned on commission. The farmer hauls the grain unsacked, and bulk handling is universal. Under The Canada Grain Act the Dominion

¹See Canada Year Book 1912, p. 450.