

2.—Grain Trade Statistics.

Tables 29 to 33 give the principal statistics relating to the storage, inspection, grading and shipment of Canadian grain, the trade in which 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 in 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. For the calendar year ended December, 1923, the total storage capacity of the 4,020 grain elevators and warehouses in Canada was 238,107,420 bushels, these figures being comparable with a total of 523 elevators and warehouses having a capacity of 18,329,352 bushels in 1901.

Shipment of Canadian Grain.—For the purposes of grain shipment the country is divided into the eastern and western inspection divisions, the western division including Fort William and Port Arthur and all territory west thereof. 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 1,934 loading platforms, distributed as follows: Manitoba, 580; Saskatchewan, 881; Alberta, 466; and British Columbia, 7. They have a loading capacity of 4,539 cars simultaneously, and during the crop year ended August 31, 1922, 20,554,247 bushels of grain were handled 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 Government has power itself to erect and operate terminal grain elevators. One such elevator is in operation at Port Arthur, and four other government elevators are in operation at Moose Jaw, Saskatoon, Calgary and Vancouver.

There are six different kinds of elevators defined in the Grain Act, viz., (1) "country elevators," situated at railway stations and receiving grain for storage before inspection; (2) "public elevators," which receive grain for storage from the western inspection division after inspection; (3) "eastern elevators," for the storage after inspection of eastern grown grain; (4) "terminal elevators," which receive

¹ See Canada Year Book, 1912 p. 450.