

The Agricultural Season of 1926.—In Eastern Canada the spring was one of the latest on record, and the cold, inclement weather had a serious effect upon the early growth and ultimate yield of cereal crops. At the end of April, practically no spring seeding had been done in the provinces of Quebec and Ontario, whereas in 1925, by the same date, 19 p.c. had been completed in Quebec and 57 p.c. in Ontario. Seeding in the Atlantic provinces does not usually start until May, but this year very little seeding had been done by the end of that month. In the Prairie Provinces, the progress of seeding was favourable, and the proportion completed by the end of April was greater than usual, especially in Alberta, where the spring opened up quite early, and conditions generally were favourable. In British Columbia, where the preceding winter was the mildest on record, the spring was from two to three weeks earlier than the average. Seeding was practically completed during April, and crop prospects were particularly favourable. Good growing weather was general throughout the West in June, but hot, dry weather in July caused some setback on the prairies. Rains early in August proved very beneficial, especially to the later sown crops. On the whole, harvest prospects were excellent for wheat but the oat crop was late, and bad weather towards the end of the season lessened the yield and lowered the quality of oats as grain to a very considerable extent. Throughout most of the Dominion, the fall season proved to be abnormal, and was indeed one of the worst for harvesting and threshing ever experienced. Continuous rain and snow greatly hindered threshing, which, although completed eventually before the setting in of the winter, was not accomplished without a considerable reduction in the grading of the grain. In Alberta, where better weather conditions enabled more progress to be made than in the other Prairie Provinces, excellent crops of wheat were harvested, but grades were also low in many districts owing to bad weather during the threshing season.

Field Crops.—Table 5 gives for Canada, by provinces, estimates of the area, yield, quality and value of the principal field crops for the years 1925 and 1926, with the averages for the period 1922 to 1925. The estimates of 1926 are based upon statistics collected from about 105,000 farmers in June of that year under arrangements made between the Dominion and Provincial Governments.

The total estimated yield of wheat in Canada in 1926 was 409,811,000 bushels as compared with 411,375,700 bushels in 1925 and the record crop of 474,199,000 bushels in 1923. The estimated yield of wheat in 1927 was 440,024,700 bushels, the second largest crop on record¹.

In comparison with the other important wheat-producing countries of the world for the period 1920 to 1924, Canada ranked next in importance to the United States and British India. During this period, the production of the United States averaged 835,432,000 bushels, that of British India 346,379,000 bushels and that of Canada 340,026,000 bushels. Next in order were Russia with 303,473,000 bushels, France with 272,090,000 bushels, and Argentina with 196,385,000 bushels. As a wheat-exporting country, Canada retained first place in the crop year 1926-27 with a total export of wheat of 251,264,000 bushels out of a world total of 705,887,000 bushels, and 9,237,000 barrels of wheat flour out of a world total of 34,786,000 barrels.

¹ For other 19 27 figures, see pp. xxvi-xxvii of the introduction.