

VII.—PRODUCTION.

In this section are included the statistics of agriculture, forestry, fisheries, minerals and manufactures.

AGRICULTURE.

Field Crops, 1915-20.—The agricultural statistics of 1920 for all the nine provinces of Canada were collected in co-operation with the Provincial Governments under the system applied for the first time in 1917. In general, therefore, the reports of both the Dominion and Provincial Governments on the crops of 1920 record identical results. In Table 1 are presented for Canada and by provinces estimates of the area, yield, quality and value of the principal field crops for each of the six years 1915 to 1920, with the five year averages for the period 1915 to 1919. In consulting this table it should be remembered that comparability is affected by the new and improved methods applied in 1917 for the provinces of Quebec, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia, and in 1918, 1919 and 1920 for all the provinces. In many cases the areas in 1917 and 1918, as established by the new method, show considerable increases, and it is not possible to ascertain to what extent these may be due to actual expansion. Probably the larger part of the increase shown in each case is the result of greater accuracy in the method of collection.

Season of 1919-20.—For 1919-20 the winter was one of exceptional severity, but the killing of winter sown wheat, amounting only to 4 p.c. of the area sown, proved to be the smallest on record. This was due to the depth of the snow and to the late spring, by which the young crop escaped to a large extent the damaging effects of alternate frost and thaw. The seeding season for spring grains was later than in any previous year on record, and the delay in getting on to the land caused farmers considerable apprehension; but when the season actually opened in May the weather proved so favourable that rapid progress compensated for the later start, and at the end of May the condition of the grain crops was only slightly below average and compared quite favourably with what it was at the corresponding dates of recent years. Conditions remained favourable during June, but hot, dry weather during the earlier part of July in Saskatchewan, where more than half the wheat crop of Canada is grown, made the situation somewhat precarious. Fortunately good rains fell during the last week of the month, just in time to effect a decided improvement in the prospects for a good wheat crop. An attack of grasshoppers threatened to assume very serious proportions in Saskatchewan; but the damage was minimized and the worst effects were averted by an energetic poisoning campaign under Government direction.

Areas and Yields of Grain Crops.—The total yield of wheat in Canada for the year 1920 was finally returned as 263,189,300 bushels from 18,232,374 acres, as compared with 193,260,400 bushels