

DAMAGE AND RUIN TO HOPS MAY BE RESULT OF RECENT RAINS

Continued Downpour is Feared by Both Growers and Dealers in This State.

LICE AND MOLD IS ALREADY APPEARING

Some Interests Pull Down Their Estimates to Less Than Hundred Thousand Bales—New York Crop in Excellent Shape.

By Hyman H. Cohen.
Not since the year 1899 has the hop crop of Oregon been in such danger as at the present moment, according to prominent growers. The continued rains mean disaster to both quality and quantity this season. Vermin has appeared in the yards in great numbers and are already working havoc with the quality. Mold is doing its part of the damage and the weather is filled with small. Many pickers have already left the hop fields for their homes on account of the disagreeable weather and every returning train and steamer from the upper Willamette valley is filled with overflowing. Quite a number of people remain in the yards, but there is much discontent among them and if the rain continues a short time these will desert their employers, too.

Promises of extra pay fail to hold the pickers to their work. Some growers on the west side have offered their crews as high as 40 cents a box to hold them, but this advance of 10 cents over the regular price has no effect.

Smaller Yards Suffer Also.
Thus far the large yards have borne the brunt of the desolations, but now the smaller yards are beginning to suffer. It is said that only about a quarter of the hops in the larger yards have been picked and the harvesting in the smaller places will average about a half of the product.

Thus far the mold has not made much progress in the hops, but growers assert that it is gaining—and gaining fast. To date the principal damage from this source has been in Washington county, but there are touches of the mold in the larger yards of Polk county.

This year's climatic conditions are similar to those of 1899 and 1902, when a considerable portion of the crop was left in the field because of the lack of pickers. Rains in those years were general about picking time and as during this season pickers deserted the yards on every hand.

Fearful of coming rains the owners of the older yards this season went over their places and picked out the ripest spots first. Up to two or three days ago conditions were ideal and there was every assurance that all the hops would

be picked. Now the hops are in many instances over ripe and it would not take more than three or four days of today's kind of weather to cause irreparable loss in both quality and quantity. Some of the growers are predicting that their crop will fall 25 per cent under that estimated a week or so ago and some dealers in this city have pulled down their estimates as low as 25,000 bales. Other dealers continue of the opinion that the crop will be from 115,000 to 118,000 bales, but all agree that unless the weather improves at once either of the latter two figures are impossible of production this season.

Red Spider Numerous.
Red spider is much more numerous in the Willamette valley yards than any of the dealers are willing to admit for fear of doing injury to the price. Other interests assert that with the shortage of hops elsewhere a pulling down of the production in Oregon will have the effect of boosting prices still higher even if the quality is not up to expectations. However at this time no dealer seems willing to do any new business and the market is at a standstill, where it will likely remain until crop conditions of the world are more settled.

Latest advices received in this city from New York state that the market there is a waiting one, the trade waiting to see what Oregon would do. Picking there has progressed under the most favorable conditions and at this time the bulk of the crop has been harvested. While there are some complaints as to early samples being thin the general quality is said to be good. The cause of the thinness of the hops is said to be premature picking.

Reports from Oneida and Madison counties indicate a larger yield than last year and advices from other sections of New York state indicate that the new average will put the crop far in excess of last year. In that state a few seedlings have been purchased at 20 and 25 cents a pound, with growers in general asking 35 cents for the best late quality. Figures just received from the customs department show that the total exports from the United States for the year were 14,210,414 pounds, or about 75,813 bales, figured on the basis of 185 pounds to the bale. With the same figuring the imports for the year are given as 10,305,333 pounds, or 55,153 bales.

The San Francisco Commercial News gives this of the situation:
"From all indications the output of California hop yards for the season under way will equal, if it does not exceed, the estimate of the Commercial News, published August 5. That estimate of 90,000 bales seems to be sustained by developments to date and is not likely to be diminished when the whole crop is marketed unless by unforeseen accidents of weather or in the doubtful contingency of inability to harvest on account of scarcity of pickers. The quality of the crop of 1906 will be notable on account of its general excellence. In every section of the state where hop-culture is prevalent reports coincide as to the excellence of

the field and its superb quality. As to prices, reports are conflicting and often intentionally misleading. It is doubtful if the 35 cent rate said to have been paid for a few choice Oregon hops, has been realized for California, though it is reported that about 30,000 bales of the latter has been contracted for. Depending upon quality and conditions, the produce of a few yards have brought from 15 to 17 1/2, though reports of 20 cents being paid for extra choice are current, but lack confirmation. The facts are that but few of the new crop have reached the market, and until receipts are much larger absolutely reliable quotations will not be available. Under all conditions the hopgrowers of California will have one of the best years known to the trade. At 17 cents there is a large profit to the cultivator, and from the advices which the Commercial News has before it, embracing every country where hops are grown, the hopgrower of this state will have occasion, at the end of the season, to felicitate himself on the bountiful return which his industry has secured for his labor.

Foreign advices are contradictory, but on the continent as well as in the United Kingdom reports are extremely depressing as to yield. The Belgian crop is said to be very meagre, below last year and the Bohemian not large enough for home consumption, while the crop in Germany, at the maximum, is not over 400,000 centners, against 545,000 centners in 1905. The estimated hop yield of English yards is not over 250,000 hundred weight. In this connection the London Times of August 23 has to say in relation to the hop trade: "Very few parcels are on offer and the market remains strong but quiet, with prices ranging from 90s to 110s. It is reported that, contrary to expectations, picking has already been started, but only in places where the hops will not stand because of the long drought. There is no material change in the crop position."

The same high authority also gives current to the following:
"Reports of hop shortages on the Pacific coast places it at 40,000 bales, instead of 1,500 bales, as previously noted."
"From excellent statistical authority the production of the world for 1906 is estimated at 291,377 bales of 185 pounds each, against a production of 1,428,053 for 1905. According to this authority, America last year furnished 238,800 bales, but is credited with estimated crop of 300,000 bales for 1906. An equally good American estimate places the production of the country this year at 342,000 bales."

"From a careful scrutiny of the reports referred to it would appear to be probable that Europe will import to supply the deficiency of home-grown hops, and from the high reputation enjoyed by hops of Oregon, a heavy demand for Europe will to a considerable extent be supplied from that source."

GREAT DAMAGE TO RESULT

Continued Rains Would Cause Loss on Hop Crop.
(Special Dispatch to The Journal.)
Albany, Or., Sept. 14.—Linn county and the Willamette valley in general is in the grasp of the storm king. Throughout the preceding day rain has fallen almost continuously. Should the heavy rains continue it will cause great



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loss of crops—the hops and prunes being especially in danger. Much wheat and oats remain in the shock awaiting the threshing, and farmers in this dilemma are becoming alarmed, fearing that great loss will take place. Among threshermen the year has brought forth the longest season known; even thus it has been impossible to cover the fields and save the outstanding crops. Men have been loath to work, and among those willing it was impossible to find enough to run a full crew on the machines. Many of those beginning the season have since left the harvest fields for the hopyards.

Hops up to the time of the first rains were in the best possible condition, no mold or destroying insects being in evidence. The general condition of the wheat and oats crop is first-class, but should the rains continue much damage will result and great loss occasioned. Should the rain continue many pickers will leave the hopfields and those working in the fields will look for more congenial occupations. The inclemency of the weather will drive the campers from the fields to the shelter of their homes.

Prunes are also in danger, a crop of first-class quality and the largest known for years is awaiting the picker and dryer. On account of the advanced stage of the crop they will soon mold and this will lessen the output and injure the quality.

The cry is going out from all parts of the valley for men to work in the fields and assist in the harvest. A great amount of wealth is represented in the hop, prune and wheat crops still left to be cared for. The saving of this will mean much to the community and valley, the state benefiting accordingly. The crop is a bumper one and the pickers are leaving, but should the rain continue there is some fear among the growers that many pickers may abandon their work. Hopmen here claim that the rain will have no bad effect on the crop, but will give the hops a richer color and make them easier to clean and then off. In fact, if it should rain for a week the crop would not suffer.

DAMAGE AT AURORA
Recent Downpour Pulls Down Hop Production There.
(Special Dispatch to The Journal.)
Aurora, Or., Sept. 14.—The recent heavy rains which began Tuesday night, accompanied with high winds, have somewhat damaged the unpicked hop crop in this section. There is a large acreage in this district yet to pick and the growers are getting anxious as to how they are going to get the work done. The pickers are leaving, but should the rain continue there is some fear among the growers that many pickers may abandon their work. Hopmen here claim that the rain will have no bad effect on the crop, but will give the hops a richer color and make them easier to clean and then off. In fact, if it should rain for a week the crop would not suffer.

FEAR LOSS OF PICKERS
Rains in Valley Cause Harvesters to Leave Work.
(Special Dispatch to The Journal.)
Salem, Or., Sept. 14.—The rains of the last few days have made disagreeable work in the hopyards and picking in many of them has been suspended. No damage has been done so far to the hops in this vicinity and at present but few pickers are leaving, but should the rain continue there is some fear among the growers that many pickers may abandon their work. Hopmen here claim that the rain will have no bad effect on the crop, but will give the hops a richer color and make them easier to clean and then off. In fact, if it should rain for a week the crop would not suffer.

DIAMOND PIN NOT TAKEN BY THIEF
A thief did not get D. H. Welch's diamond pin after all. It was reported to Captain of Detective Bruin yesterday afternoon that a diamond pin, valued at \$50 and belonging to Welch, had been stolen from the O. K. barber shop, at 31st and Washington streets. As the pin was fastened securely in the tie and both were missing, it was thought that the daring thief had taken them while Welch was being shaved.

An umbrella belonging to Captain A. G. Brown was the "thief." Captain Brown a short time after leaving the barber shop yesterday was stopped by a man who said that the captain had dropped a cravat with a diamond pin in it. The captain was unable to understand how he could lose a diamond pin and cravat which he never possessed, advertised for the owner. Later the pin was identified as that lost by Welch.

It is thought that some one in reaching for a hat knocked the tie, which was hanging just above the captain's umbrella, into the umbrella, consequently when the captain opened his umbrella after leaving the shop the tie fell out.

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house, cost, \$2,500; Shastan Street, two-story dwelling, Marshall between Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth, cost, \$2,000; C. Kahl, one-story dwelling, East side between East Seventh and East Eighth, cost, \$2,750.