

SOMETHING NEW IN COTTON STATISTICS.

Prompter Service Than Ever Before—The Figures Show That 8,005,503 Bales of 1902 Cotton Were Ginned to Dec. 13, or 90.2 Per Cent. of the Crop—Monthly Ginning Reports to be Secured This Year.

Washington, January 7.—The Census Bureau report on the cotton ginned from the 1902 crop up to and including December 13 last, is 9,311,835 bales, irrespective of shape or weight, equal to 8,905,503, according to the commercial counting. This is 90.2 per cent of the crop. The report follows:

States and Territories.	No. Active Ginneries Reporting.	1902 cotton ginned to Dec. 13, bales.	Ginners' estimate quantity to be ginned after Dec. 13.	Canvassing agents' estimate per cent crop ginned to Dec. 13.
United States	30,194	9,311,835	1,057,771	90.2
Alabama	3,899	896,944	65,168	94.2
Arkansas	2,510	768,861	149,715	85.1
Florida	284	54,443	6,598	87.9
Georgia	5,046	1,376,850	66,714	95.4
Indian Territory	428	372,042	52,831	87.2
Kentucky	3	1,027	150	87.3
Louisiana	2,145	670,485	159,908	83.2
Mississippi	4,276	1,135,557	225,150	82.8
Missouri	59	39,185	3,115	94.3
North Carolina	2,683	517,068	28,232	94.9
Oklahoma	218	163,190	29,568	84.5
South Carolina	3,187	863,989	44,754	96.4
Tennessee	815	272,135	34,409	88.8
Texas	4,542	2,167,472	188,968	91.7
Virginia	109	12,537	2,491	82.0

The above statistics of the quantity of cotton ginned to December 13th are expressed in bales as pressed at the ginneries, irrespective of shape or weight. In the total of 9,311,835 bales there are 812,661 round bales, averaging from 240 to 300 pounds each. Counting such round bales as half bales, as is the custom in the commercial community, the total ginned to December 13th is 8,905,503. By two of the most thorough canvasses this season 32,528 ginneries, active and idle, have been located and reported, of which number 30,194 have been operated for this crop. In their December canvass the local special agents ascertained the quantity of cotton ginned from the beginning of the season to and including December 13th and also secured from each of the active ginners his estimate of the quantity of cotton to be ginned by his establishment after December 13th.

The estimate of the percentage of the crop ginned is based on the estimates of 626 canvassing agents, who were instructed to confine their estimates to the territories canvassed by them and to the knowledge gained therefrom. One estimate therefore serves as a check against the other. According to the estimate of the ginners 10.2 per cent of the crop remained to be ginned after December 13th, while, according to the estimate of the canvassing agents the percentage was 9.8. Applying these percentages and the general average bale weight obtained from combining round and square bales, the crop, according to the ginners, is 9,996,300

bales, and according to the canvassing agents 9,654,106 bales of an average gross weight of 500 pounds. The Census Office assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of these estimates. This report will be followed by a third and final report at the end of the ginning season, about March 16th, which will distribute the crop by counties, segregate upland and sea island cottons, and give weights of bales.

In giving out the report Director Merriam made the following statement:

It seems important to again state, in connection with these statistics of the cotton crop of 1902, that in so

far as they relate to the bales of cotton ginned to December 13th last, they involve no guess work at any point, no estimate by anybody, and no uncertainty of any kind. They represent the exact number of bales of cotton that have passed through the ginneries. All that has been done by the Census Office is to make and certify the additions. Anybody is at liberty to examine the whole process adopted by the Census Office in handling these returns. The returns represent the ginning operations of every ginning establishment which has handled any portion of the growth of 1902.

The report is made at a time so near the close of the ginning season as to permit a very close approximation of the growth of the year, in 500-pound bales. It seems probable that the final report, to be issued about March 16th next, will not show a variation of 50,000 bales from the estimates of the total crop which are submitted from two sources in connection with the figures of cotton ginned to December 13th.

This is the first time in the history of the American cotton crop that definite and exact knowledge of the season's growth has been placed in possession of the public at so early a date, or within a date five months as early.

The Census Office is already perfecting plans for more frequent reports in connection with the crop of 1903. Its first report will cover all the cotton ginned, of the year's growth, up to and including September 1st. This portion of each year's

crop is now assigned, in the commercial estimates, to the production of the previous year as the commercial cotton year ends September 1st.

The second report will include all cotton ginned up to and including October 18th, 1903, the date of the first report for 1902, enabling an exact comparison in the two seasons. The third report will cover the cotton ginned up to and including November 18th, a period of the utmost importance to the growers and manufacturers. The fourth report will represent the cotton ginned to December 13th. The fifth will be the final report.

It will be seen that this plan contemplates practically a monthly report during the ginning season of 1903. If it shall be found that still more frequent reports are desirable, the Census Office will be prepared to make them for the crop of 1904.

Agricultural Conditions in Alamance County.

The report of the party which made the Alamance County Soil Survey contains the following reference to agricultural conditions in that section:

The farms of Alamance County vary in size from a few to more than a thousand acres, the average being 125 acres; but since many farmers own more than one farm, the average number of acres to the landowner considerably exceeds this average. There is little doubt that smaller farms with a more intensive system of cultivation would prove more profitable than the present system, but as long as land is worth only from \$3 to \$40 an acre, according to location and improvements, with an average price of from \$8 to \$10, the temptation to own a great deal of it, and to spread his energies over many acres, is too great for the average agriculturist to resist.

PRINCIPAL CROPS

The principal crops grown in the area surveyed are wheat, corn, tobacco, and oats, with cotton, clover, grass, and cowpeas of secondary importance. On the Durham sandy loam, which occupies the northeastern part of the county, tobacco, although formerly more extensively grown, is still the principal product and the money crop. A greater diversity is now being practiced, and the farmers are producing year by year more of the commodities needed for home use. Wheat, corn, and oats are grown over the entire area, but are best suited to, and more profitably raised on, the Cecil clay. The best farmers practice crop rotation. A two-year rotation is used in the tobacco belt, corn or wheat being alternated with the tobacco. Some think a longer rotation better, and a three and five year rotation is more generally practiced on the Cecil clay. In the three-year rotation wheat is followed by clover and that by corn. The five-year scheme provides for grass and pasture two years, then wheat, followed by corn and oats. Some of the best farmers consider the latter

the most satisfactory rotation. Trucking is unimportant here, as there is little demand for truck products in the home markets. Fruits are grown and nearly every farmer has an orchard, but very little fruit is marketed. A majority of the farms are owned and tilled by the farmers themselves, who use improved machinery to some extent and employ some day labor. Both white and black labor is employed, at a cost of from \$8 to \$10 a month and board. In order to obtain the most profitable results from negro labor, it is necessary to have an experienced man to direct the work.

THE TENANT SYSTEM

Much of the land is cultivated under the tenant system—practiced to some extent throughout the county. The tenant usually pays a certain percentage of the crop grown for the use of the land, and the landowner may furnish the stock and subsistence to his tenant, in which case a larger part of the crop is reserved by the owner. In arrangements of this sort the rent is customarily about one-half. This system does not tend toward the best husbandry of the land, but rather to the cultivation of only the better parts of the farms, leaving the poorer fields abandoned and unimproved. There are a few large and fertile farms in the county which are managed or tenanted by skilled farmers. These farms are being improved continually, besides returning good profits to their owners.

A vast amount of commercial fertilizer is used in Alamance County. In most cases a complete fertilizer is bought, but some of the best farmers are experimenting and buying only those constituents which they find the soil needs, and which they can not supply by plowing under leguminous crops.

FARM IMPROVEMENTS.

The farms in Alamance County are not generally incumbered. Many of them have neatly built and painted frame buildings and good barns and outhouses. As a rule, however, the barns are small and inexpensive, and the farm implements comparatively few and of old patterns. Fairly good grades of farm animals are kept, and here and there considerable interest is taken in growing pedigreed stock. A few small dairies were noticed.

While there are some fertile and well-improved farms in the area, the greater part of the land is not now in a high state of cultivation, though it is evident that conditions are improving. There are striking examples of the results of better husbandry in the Cecil clay area. Farms that a few years ago were poorly cultivated and comparatively unproductive, with many washed and abandoned fields, are to-day in a high state of cultivation, with all abandoned places reclaimed and capable of producing the highest yields of the crops suited to that soil type.

The North Carolina Railway, running through the center of the county in an eastward and westward direction, has been an important stim-