

Cereal Crops.

Wheat.—This crop is still the most important of cereals, and as shown by the map (Fig. 45) it is pretty regularly distributed with the arable land over the whole area, though the most favoured areas are the maritime region in West Sussex and parts of East Kent.

Although so much wheat is still grown the decline in the acreage under this crop during the last generation has been enormous. In 1874, when the maximum area of which we have a record was attained, there were 265,164 acres of wheat in the three counties; in 1904 this had shrunk to 87,315, from which minimum it has since risen a little to 111,529 in 1909. The curves on Fig. 7 show the rate at which this shrinkage has taken place in each of the three counties. Though its cultivation has declined so much, wheat is far from being an unprofitable crop; indeed of late years market gardeners in Surrey and North Kent, where straw is readily saleable, have been finding wheat more remunerative than vegetables. The most widely grown variety at the present day is without doubt "Square Heads' Master," or "Teverson," as it is very generally named. This is found in every district, and is universally approved. After this comes Standard Red (very general), Stand-up-White, and Rivetts—the latter on the Weald and other heavy soils, where it appears to be gaining ground again after having almost disappeared. On the best land, and especially on the loams, two old wheats of better quality are still grown—Golden Drop and Rough Chaff. The latter was particularly a favourite in the coastal districts of East Kent, under the name of Old Hoary, but its tendency to "lodge" and to retain moisture at harvest causes it to be little seen, despite its fine quality, which is probably above that of any other English wheat. "White strawed brown" is a wheat much seen in East Kent; Chiddam is also occasionally grown in the West. High quality wheat was at one time much produced on some of the strong loams in Surrey. The character of the wheat soils is discussed later on p. 140.

Barley.—The barley crop (see Fig. 44) is very locally distributed, being confined to the chalky and sandy loams of East Kent, the Greensand areas of West Surrey and West Sussex, and to the maritime region of Sussex. Elsewhere it is but an occasional crop of poor quality. In the real barley-growing districts, as in the Isle of Thanet, the finer Chevallier varieties, such as Hallet's Pedigree, are almost universally grown. Archer's Stiff Straw is common, but Goldthorpe is only found occasionally on the stiffer lands. Speaking generally, the Kentish malting barleys are sold locally and are of very fine quality though they rarely appear in the open prize lists at the Brewers' Exhibition. The