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these figures, but they are sufficient to show that there is a great margin for improvement in the out-turn of wheat and barley in Mesopotamia.

In paragraph 36 of their report, the Trade Commissioners write: "but our greatest hopes for the future of Mesopotamia are founded upon its possibilities as a cotton producing country." And, in accordance with their suggestion, an expert in the Indian Agricultural Service, Mr. E. Thomas, B.S.C., was sent to conduct experiments with varieties of Egyptian, American and Indian seed. These experiments were, owing to the short time available to Mr. Thomas for making his arrangements, confined to one plantation in the neighbourhood of Baghdad instead of being, as the Commissioners recommended, undertaken in different localities. The results are extremely interesting. It must not be forgotten that the land was specially fertile, the soil being a sandy loam with good natural drainage, but uncultivated for the previous three years. The number of waterings given was 17. Ten are given in Egypt and 12 in the Sudan. Colonel Evans considers that the plants were over-watered, and that 10 waterings would have been sufficient. The late arrival of some of the imported seed depreciated the value of some of the tests. The plants were withered by two frosts early in December. When I saw the plantation on 18th December I was much struck by the very large number of bolls in some of the plots which had, while still immature, been destroyed by the frost.

The results of Mr. Thomas' experiments are excellent; in considering them it is desirable to remember that it is highly probable that the returns would be appreciably less on land representative of the average Iraq soils irrigable by direct flow. The greater part of the soils in Upper Mesopotamia are stiff rather heavy clay loams, which will need careful cultivation and skilful irrigation if they are to grow good cotton. Cotton is being sown on these soils this year and the results will be interesting. The plots were $\frac{1}{10}$th of an acre in size, the figures have been calculated to the acre yield from these plots. The best results were the following :—

Variety.	Origin.	Number of plots.	Average length.	Average yield of seed cotton in lbs. per acre.	Remarks.
			inches.		
Webber 49	American .. .	1	$1\frac{1}{2}$ -$1\frac{9}{16}$	2,420	Pure type.
Punjab 47	Punjab-American ..	4	$1\frac{1}{2}$ -$1\frac{9}{16}$	2,107½	,,
Punjab 255F	Punjab-American ..	4	$1\frac{1}{2}$ -$1\frac{3}{16}$	2,057½	,,
Black Rattler ..	Sind-American ..	4	$1\frac{3}{16}$-$1\frac{5}{16}$	1,982½	Rather mixed.
Triumph ..	Sind-American ..	5	1 -$1\frac{1}{2}$ mostly $1\frac{3}{16}$	1,906	Very mixed.
Turkish	Egyptian	3	$1\frac{3}{16}$-$1\frac{7}{16}$	1,492½	Mixed.
Allan's Staple.. ..	Long Sind-American	5	$1\frac{3}{16}$-$1\frac{3}{8}$	1,486	,,

Mr. Thomas was able to sell the dead plants for firewood for three times the amount of the rent.

The results above are for seed cotton. The handbook on "Cotton and other Vegetables Fibres," by Dr. Goulding, published by the Imperial Institute in 1917, gives (p. 55) the average yield per acre in Egypt in the triennial period 1910–11 to 1912–13 as 424 lbs., and that in India in 1913–14 (p. 64) as 85 lbs. It is undoubtedly sown there on much bad and unsuitable land. There are thus great variations; 150 to 200 lbs. would probably be regarded as a fair return. Experiments in the Sudan give, I understand, something like 250 lbs. an acre. These figures are for lint, which weighs approximately one-third of seed cotton. The spinning and weaving results with last year's crop of cotton are not yet known. While it would not do to generalize too much from Mr. Thomas' figures, they can certainly be regarded as proving that a good long-stapled cotton can be grown in Mesopotamia. In Egypt cotton is sown between the middle of February and the middle of April. The first picking in upper Egypt is in August, and in the Delta in September. Dr. Goulding says, "the last pickings are picked in November." At the beginning of November, 1918, there was very little left on the ground.

In Mesopotamia sowings should be finished by the middle of April, but the weather is too cold to enable them to be begun as early as in Egypt. Seed will not do much more than germinate in March. Frost may be expected in Baghdad by the beginning of December. The crop must mature without the hot moist atmosphere which is so beneficial to it in Lower Egypt. The bollworm is a serious pest but the only one yet encountered. The problem of the selection of the best variety of cotton for different tracts has to be solved. On lands commanded by perennial irrigation from the canals

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