

From Western Fields.

Harvest Problems—Favourable Threshing Returns— New Railway for Alberta—Canadian Northern Balked.

Reports from Winnipeg show that unusually heavy rains have seriously interfered with harvesting and threshing operations in the West since the beginning of the month, and the farmers have been able to make little progress. By far the greater part of the wheat and a large proportion of the coarse grains are already in stook, so that the question is not so much one of saving the harvest, but rather of saving it easily and quickly. The problem of taking off a wheat crop amounting to 100,000,000 bushels or more is serious enough when all the conditions are favourable. A few days' delay in September, when the supply of help is most plentiful, may prove to be a serious drawback before the close of the agricultural season. It is necessary to pay the harvesters in order to hold them to their work, and paying for wet days naturally has a tendency to make a big breach in the farmer's profits. In a season like the present he is concerned about taking off the harvest with the least possible outlay for manual assistance, and he cannot afford to have many rainy days in his schedule. There is also the consideration that delay is dangerous in connection with the grain that is still uncut.

Thrashing returns continue to bear out the impression that the wheat crop made a great stride towards recovery in the latter part of July. Even in southern Alberta, where the situation was thought to be almost hopeless, there are some fine yields, which will serve to bring up the average and minimize the loss from the year's operations.

New Railway in Alberta.

New York capitalists are said to be at the back of a big scheme for a line of railway which will traverse the entire length of Alberta from the international boundary to Peace River landing, a distance of over 700 miles, and which will connect up with the Hill system in Montana. Plans for the first hundred miles have been approved and construction has already begun. The company, which is to be known as the Pincher Creek, Cardston and Montana Railway, will apply at the coming session of the legislature for an extension of charter which will permit them to construct a main line through Alberta by way of Calgary and Edmonton into the Peace River country. There will also be a branch into Kootenay to tap the coal fields which it is understood the company has secured.

Canadian Northern Balked.

The Canadian Northern Railway is again balked in its efforts to locate its line west from Edmonton towards Yellowhead Pass. Plans for the line from St. Albert west have been disapproved by the Railway Commission at Ottawa, on the ground that the route proposed is too close to that of the Grand Trunk Pacific. The engineers first endeavored to run farther north, but could not do so on account of the hilly nature of the country. Unless the C. N. R. can convince the Railway Commission of the necessity for running parallel to the G. T. P., material change in the plans will be required.

Financial and General.

MESSRS. G. A. STIMSON & COMPANY, of Toronto, have now completed the establishment of a branch in London, England.

THE LATEST MERGERS, regarding which rumours are in circulation, are in one case, cotton, and in the other, a number of the malleable casting companies of Ontario.

CANADIAN NORTHERN RAILWAY.—Mr. A. D. McRae, of the Canadian Northern Railway has announced in Vancouver that car building shops for the entire system, employing 5,000 men, will be erected at Port Mann, the company's terminal for its line in British Columbia.

MESSRS. WOOD, GUNDY & COMPANY have just purchased \$512,000, 4½ p.c. debentures of the City of Moose Jaw, Sask., of which \$495,000 mature at the end of 40 years. The bonds are issued for various civic improvements including waterworks, electric light and sewer extensions, hospital, market, fairgrounds, etc.

WE ARE INFORMED that the University of Cambridge (England), has acquired the copyright of the Encyclopedia Britannica, and will publish at the University Press an entirely new (Eleventh) edition of this well-known work, in 28 volumes, about the end of this year.

SHAWINIGAN POWER.—A circular has been issued to shareholders stating that they are entitled to subscribe on the basis of one share for each fourteen held to an additional issue of \$500,000 common stock to be made by the company at par. The intention of the directors to put the common stock on a 5 p.c. basis from January 1 next is also stated.

SIR ROBERT PERKS informed an interviewer in Toronto this week that plans are being submitted to the Government for a drydock at Lévis, capable of accommodating the largest ocean-going steamships. The undertaking will be carried out by the Dominion Drydock Company, which comprises the Canadian Pacific Line, the White Star Line, the Allan Steamship Company, Harland & Wolff, of Belfast, and Davie Bros., of Quebec, under the bonus system provided in the subsidy act of last May. Under the act a subsidy of 3½ per cent. on the construction cost up to \$4,000,000 for a period of thirty-five years is guaranteed, and the work will be constructed to come within the \$4,000,000 mark.

Insurance Items.

THE PACIFIC COAST FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY of Vancouver, B.C., will, it is stated, enter the United States field next year, when its paid-up capital will have reached \$1,000,000.

THE TWENTY-THIRD CONVENTION of the International Association of Accident Underwriters will be held at Mount Washington Hotel, Bretton Woods, N.H., on September 20, 21, 22 and 23.

NEW YORK PLATE GLASS UNDERWRITERS complain of the very high loss ratio this year.