

Conditions in the West

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The complete tie up of mails owing to the strike made it impossible to send anything for the Journal for either 30th of July or August 6, and now there is nothing cheerful to send with regard to the crops excepting in Manitoba. The previous report a synopsis of which appeared in my last letter was not very good reading but there was in it the promise that with the coming of rain much lost ground might be recovered. Heavy frost in July is so unusual that no thought was given to it. First report of frost came July 23, and was from northern Alberta, the reports now in show that there has been frost in some portion of the west practically every night from July 23 to August 2. There is no record of any such thing happening before since land was cultivated in the West. The only approach to it was in 1888 when the crop, which was late and heavy that year, was caught in the blossom on August 4 and 5, and was so seriously damaged that the government departments kept no statistics. Of course, the Free Press was besieged with inquiries so soon as frost was reported, but wisely decided not to attempt a general report until sufficient time had elapsed to give some chance of finding out the actual damage. Even yet this is not possible but sufficient is known to make the year as the most disastrous in the history of the west in view of the enormous areas involved. Crops are all late and the crop that had not reached the blossom stage was less injured but on the other hand is so late that it may get nipped yet. As it is generally conceded that one degree of frost effects wheat in blossom great care was exercised to find out the proportion of wheat in bloom at time frosts came, unfortunately the percentage was very large.

The questions asked in relation to the crop were: What degree of frost since July 16? On what dates did it come? Was wheat in bloom on the date of frost? At what dates will wheat cutting begin? Has there been rain? Is more rain needed? Has there been hail damage? What is condition of coarse grains? Have conditions as to food for livestock improved? What is the outlook for potatoes?

Out of 212 points queried 170 replies were received. Manitoba has been extremely fortunate, both as to rain supply and absence of frost. Out of 81 points queried 74 were received. Only 6 of these show frost and only one showed 5 deg. Damage confined to low lands mainly and that only in patches. There has been an abundance of rain and only 20 points state that additional showers to help filling would be acceptable. At 28 points cutting of wheat will be general between 10th and 15th, and at the balance cutting will be general between 20th and 26th. This is an indication that crop is late and still subject to damage, but if wheat matures as it now stands Manitoba generally will have a good crop of wheat and at many points a bumper. Many districts in the south report the best wheat crop in years, while Dauphin reports absolutely the best crop in her history. Hail damage in Manitoba has been of the slightest. Condition of coarse grains has improved enormously and "good," "extra," "fair," "excellent," occur over and over in regard to coarse grains. The potato crop is evidently a whopper as only one point reports a light crop. Rye and barley has already been cut at a number of points.

SASKATCHEWAN.

In Saskatchewan 10 points were queried and 76 heard from. Of these only 21 reported no frost. The remaining 55 report frosts from 2 to 13 degrees and nearly all wheat either partially or entirely in blossom at the time frosts occurred. A number of points report frost three nights in succession. Some points report damage from 10 to as high as 75 per cent, but very many points report that so far it is impossible to tell definitely what the damage will be. Other points where frosts occurred state that the damage is confined to low spots and is not serious. In nearly every case the frosts were followed by rain which has apparently minimized the damage considerably. Reports indicate that cutting wheat will be general between 20 and 25 August, while a few points state that it will not be general until September first. There has been a pretty general abundance of rain and only three points claim rain as still badly needed, but a number of points would like light showers for filling. Reports on coarse grains are very mixed but there seems to have been a pretty general improvement since rains came, and they have suffered much less from frost, more especially the later crops.

Considering the degrees of frost the reports on the potato crop are very fair. A few points report them badly frozen, but "good," "fair," or "excellent" occur more frequently. Conditions as to feed for stock show a very general improvement.

ALBERTA.

In Alberta 28 points queried and 21 heard from. The only point in the south reporting frost is Cardston, while all points in the north report heavy frosts. Some state that all wheat is being cut for green feed and others report 60 to 75 per cent of wheat fit only for green feed, but remainder filling well. There has been abundance of rain at many points, both north and south, but feed conditions in Southern Alberta are not much improved. A special, official report to the Free Press states: "Frost damage has been heavy throughout the province, north of a line drawn east from Wetaskiwin. Some of the wheat and barley on high ground is filling but there will be a very small percentage in all this territory worth threshing. Oats are looking very fair where there is enough moisture and may make a crop though it is too soon to say definitely. Peace River and Grande Prairie also frozen. Spirit River not so bad. Lacombe and Red Deer and Ponoka escaped though there was frost at Olds. No frost south of Didsbury. There might still be enough seed wheat in province if no further set back. Feed very short in south and stock-

men slowly coming north to buy green feed or arrange for wintering of stock. Cutting of frozen wheat for feed well under way. Farmers are accepting \$7 to \$8 per ton in stack, but not cutting until they see a market."

The Edmonton Bulletin with commendable energy has taken up the work of endeavoring to bring the man with feed to sell and the man with stock to feed together and is advertising absolutely free of charge where feed is to be obtained. In one issue no less than 37 points in northern Alberta advertise wheat for sale for green hay.

The situation with regard to cattle is steadily improving. The provincial government of Manitoba has already bought over 1,000 head of young females and all these have been distributed direct to farmers in various parts of the province. Very large quantities of hay have been located and are being cut, but there is some difficulty as to price owing to the length of haul from point of cutting to railway. Contractors want 60 per ton per mile for this haul and therefore a haul of over 15 miles would make the price prohibitive.

The frosts have further complicated the situation with regard to hogs, as there are large numbers in the country and coarse grains are late, mostly a light crop and will be dear. Already a lot of liquidation is going on. These hogs are not mature and should not come on the market.

Altogether conditions in the west are not very rosy at the present moment. The west will undoubtedly get bread and seed and some little to spare, but in view of the fifteen million acres in wheat this year the returns will be very small.

LAST WEEK'S RECORD OF ACTIVE MONTREAL STOCKS.

Last week's trade on the Montreal Stock Exchange was the best of the year in volume of business as well as in breadth and strength. The stocks which

changed hands totalled up 46,915 shares. The high record for any previous week this year was 40,937 in May.

Sales.	Open.	High.	Low.	Last sale.	Net ch'ge.	YEAR	
						High.	Low.
2,821 Ames Holden	26	28	26	28	+2	28	15
1,990 Do. pfd.	69	71 1/2	69	71	+1	71 1/2	47
735 Brazilian	39 1/4	39 1/4	37	37	- 1/4	40	32
2,906 B. C. Fishing	45 1/2	*52 1/2	45 1/2	*51 1/2	+7 1/2	*52 1/2	40
2,462 Brompton	*66 1/2	57 1/2	*56 1/2	57 1/2	+1 1/2	57 1/2	41 1/2
280 Can. Car	37 1/2	38	37 1/2	38	+1	38	18 1/2
402 Do. pfd.	90	91	89 1/2	91	+1 1/4	92	49 1/2
1,794 Can. Cement	63	65 1/4	62 1/4	64 1/4	+1 1/4	65 1/4	*57
425 Can. Converters	*45	*48	*45	*48	+3 1/4	*48	43
905 Can. Forgings	*196	*196	*194	*195 1/4	- 1/4	200	150
275 Can. Gen. Electric	102	103	102	103	+1 1/2	105	101 1/2
875 Can. Loco.	60	64	60	64	+5	64	58
1,972 Can. Steamship	43	45	43	43 1/2	+ 3/4	45	39 1/4
180 Do. Voting Trust	45	49 1/2	45	49 1/2	+4 1/2	49 1/2	38
548 Do. pfd.	76 1/2	78	76 1/2	78	+1 1/4	78 1/2	76
609 Con. Smelting	25	25	25	25	unch.	26	25
1,760 Dom. Bridge	*125	*127 1/2	*125 1/2	*126 1/2	+3 1/2	*127 1/2	*123
2,369 Dom. Steel	61 1/2	62 1/2	61 1/2	62	+ 1/2	63 1/2	*53
428 Dom. Textile	89 1/2	92	89 1/2	92	+3 1/2	92	80 1/2
290 Hillcrest	30	30	28	30	-	36	28
1,425 Laurentide	169	175	169	172	+3	175	152
250 Lyall	81 1/2	81 1/2	80 1/4	80 1/4	-1 1/4	82	*62
151 Macdonald	14	14 1/2	14	14	+ 1/2	16 1/2	13 1/2
1,037 Maple Leaf	112	116	112	116	+2 1/2	116	94
250 Mont. Cottons	56	57	56	57	+1	57	50
3,244 Mont. Power	*80 1/2	*82	*80 1/2	*81 1/2	+1 1/2	82	68 1/2
550 N. S. Steel	71 1/2	71 1/2	67 1/2	67 1/2	-3	71 1/2	66
180 Ontario Steel	30	30	30	30	+ 1/2	35	22 1/2
128 Ottawa Power	82 1/2	82 1/2	82 1/2	82 1/2	- 1/2	85	81 1/2
185 Quebec Ry.	18	18	17 1/2	17 1/2	unch.	22 1/2	15
579 Riordon	118 1/2	*118 1/2	*117 1/2	*118 1/2	+2 1/2	123	117 1/2
557 Shawinigan	111 1/2	113 1/2	111 1/2	112 1/2	+1 1/2	116 1/2	*107
795 Spanish River	13 1/2	14 1/2	13 1/2	14	+ 1/2	16 1/2	13
1,354 Do. pfd.	50	54 1/2	50	54 1/2	+4 1/2	54 1/2	50
1,795 St. Lawrence Flour	83	92	83	92	+11 1/2	92	50
3,946 Steel of Canada	66 1/4	67 1/2	66	67 1/4	+1 1/2	67 1/2	*49 1/2
225 Do. pfd.	94 1/4	95	94 1/4	94 1/4	- 1/2	*95 1/4	89 1/2
193 Tooke Bros.	19	23	19	23	23	19
817 Wabasso	49 1/2	54	49 1/2	54	+4	54	21
— BANKS —							
129 Commerce	185	185	185	185	unch.	185 1/2	185
58 Hochelaga	140	140	140	140	unch.	140	140
— BONDS —							
\$40,000 Asbestos	70 1/4	70 1/4	70 1/4	70 1/4	-1 1/4	73	70
19,000 Bell Telephone	87 1/4	87 1/4	87 1/4	87 1/4	-4 1/2	92 1/2	87 1/4
23,900 Can. Loan (1931)	95	95	94 1/4	95	unch.	95 1/4	92 1/4
40,900 Do. (1937)	93 1/2	93 1/2	93 1/2	93 1/2	unch.	94	91 1/2
10,000 Penmans	85 1/2	85 1/2	85 1/2	85 1/2	85 1/2	85 1/2
— UNLISTED SHARES —							
200 Can. Felt, pfd.	45	45	45	45	unch.	45	45
1,935 Laurentide Power	51 1/2	52 1/2	51 1/2	52 1/2	+ 1/2	54 1/2	50

*Ex-dividend.