

## Conditions in the West

By E. CORA HIND.

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There is a general feeling of anxiety with regard to the crop conditions and rain is universally needed. There has been considerable rain during the latter part of May and the beginning of June, but not anything approaching a general soaking of the land, and on the contrary, there has been almost continuous winds. On Monday, June 10th, there was a hot wind, such a wind as had occasionally cooked the heads during July, but is a most exceptional experience in June. It scorched the tops of the wheat in many fields, and since this there has been wind practically every day, and only intermittent local showers. The crop is backward, owing to the repeated frosts of May and required warmth and moisture. The warmth on the whole, it has had, during the past ten days, but no moisture, and the dryness, coupled with the high winds, has been very bad for the wheat. A very considerable percentage, particularly in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, has finally been plowed up and reseeded to other grains. The fields that had been damaged by frost and heavy winds in May, were left as long as possible in the hope that they would recover, but many showed no sign of recovery, and it was thought best to plow them down and reseed with oats and barley. Much of the oats seeded in this way will only be suitable for feed and will be fed in the sheaf. It is very difficult to state how large the percentage is lost this way. It certainly runs as high as 10% and 12% in some districts, and even higher in others.

While Alberta has really suffered less than Manitoba and Saskatchewan from frosts and winds, the extreme south of the province has suffered more from drought. Reports received during the present week from the Milk River country, near the Montana boundary, indicate that considerable areas of wheat have never germinated at all, owing to the dryness of the soil.

Rain within the next week would probably save the situation, in so far as the wheat is concerned that is now growing, but nothing can replace the wheat which has been plowed down. The Dominion Statistical authorities should make every effort to secure accurate figures as to the actual extent of this reseeded territory, as it will make a material difference in the yield of wheat, and should be kept well before the public to prevent any wasting of the wheat supply still in the country. The Saskatchewan provincial government has published an estimated acreage in wheat of 9,220,000. This, on the basis of the average crop would give the province 160,000,000 bushels of wheat. No allowance, however, is made for shrinkage in acreage since the seeding. With a single exception of this shrinkage, actual conditions are no worse than they were at the corresponding date of 1915, and everyone knows the crop that followed the extraordinary June of that year. While conditions are no worse, they are different, and the season is different, there being a very much greater lack of moisture than there was in 1915.

The writer has personally covered a considerable area in Manitoba and was surprised and somewhat shocked at conditions, particularly as to the amount of land which is standing vacant, and which up to the present time no attempt has been made to summer-fallow.

The acreage in oats and barley, particularly barley, are very large, and as barley can be used for flour and if the remainder of the season proves favorable for that grain, there should be something to take the place of the wheat which has been lost. One trouble at the present time with barley, is, that there is little or no moisture in the ground to start the late seeded fields. Barley has been seeded this year as late as June 15. Much of this barley is, what is known as the "sixty-day" variety. It is good for stock feeding, but would not be desirable for milling purposes.

The prospective acreage in flax has been materially curtailed also owing to the dry weather.

### LIVESTOCK.

Livestock markets are duller and somewhat weaker than they have been. At the present time there is very considerable agitation in Winnipeg and to some extent in the smaller towns further west, to have a thorough inquiry into the prices being charged consumers for the various grades of meats. The prices are much higher in Winnipeg than they are in South

St. Paul, while the price for cattle and hogs on the hoof is slightly higher. In the latter market, of course, there is a certain amount of reason in this. South St. Paul market receives all the light dairy cattle of Minnesota that come under the head of "Can-ners and cutters", and from these animals a percentage of steaks and roasts are always available for the retail trade. As these animals are bought from 7c to 9c a pound, it is easy to see that steaks from them can be sold at a very lower price than steaks from steers that bring 10c to 15c on the hoof. There is no corresponding trade in Winnipeg. In the first place there is a very much smaller percentage of cattle of the dairy type received, and in the second place, there is a very limited market for such stuff here, as there is practically no canning done, or the amount of canning is so small as to be negligible. However, while this might account for some difference, it does not fully account for the discrepancy nor does it account for the difference between the prices west from Fort William and east from that point; the western price being considerably higher than in eastern Canada. Of course, the Toronto yards receive a certain amount of beef mostly of the grade of that marketed in St. Paul, but the percentage of this class of beef marketed in Toronto is much less than the percentage marketed in St. Paul.

### COAL.

When the West is not considering labor and the cost of food, it is concentrating on coal, and the prices of the western coal are furnishing, not only food for thought, but much discussion. A very great many people would like to have it explained to them why they hear so very much about the coal fields of Alberta, and practically nothing about the coal fields of Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan has large coal mines in Estevan down near the southern boundary. This is a very fair coal, and has been for a number of years used in the public buildings in this province. It is much nearer than any of the Alberta fields, and the difference in the freight rate alone would be a very material advantage.

The campaign to get people to buy their supply now is handicapped to an enormous extent by the doubt that exists in the public mind that something "is being put over on them". Many of the large institutions with large numbers of employees have been endeavoring to help the situation by forming committees to find out how much coal is needed, to secure the coal and permit the employees to pay for it at so much a week, but even in these cases they are meeting with a very general lack of response.

If the coal situation is as stated, and there actually will not be a lower price, or any anthracite, conditions in Winnipeg next winter will be serious in the extreme, for certainly the people are not buying half of their coal supply now. It will require very direct and conclusive evidence to convince the citizen on the street that this is not a means to operate western coal mines, and that no anthracite coal will come to Winnipeg this season. Of course, good may finally come out of evil. There is absolutely no reason why western Canada should not depend entirely upon her own coal supply. She has one entire province and part of another absolutely underlaid with coal, and that, coal of a very fair quality, but these mines have not been developed and transportation facilities are inadequate, and the price being asked exorbitantly high, in view of the quality of the coal, and this makes people very reluctant to go to the additional expense of having their furnaces charged to accommodate the western coal, and at the same time pay more for it than they previously paid for best anthracite.

If the present condition is an attempt of coal mine operators to force the western coal on the market, they are going about it in a very foolish manner. A far more effective method would have been to put western coal on the prairie markets at a price that would make it extremely attractive to the public. Nobody has yet come forward to explain the reason of the difference between the price at the pit plus the freight, and the price to the consumer.

Altogether the West is very uneasy at the present time and the citizens are looking forward to next winter with a great deal of apprehension.

## Cost of Launching Victory Loan

Ottawa, June 23. — In connection with certain comment, which has appeared recently in some of the press, respecting the remuneration paid to professional bond dealers, members of stock exchanges, and others, for services rendered in connection with the latest Victory Loan, the Minister of Finance made the following statement today:

"The services of the investment, bond and stock-exchange houses of the Dominion, were commandeered by the Finance Department, with the object of securing the active and continuous co-operation of a body of experts specially trained in the sale and distribution of securities. The Dominion Executive Committee, composed of fifteen outstanding representatives in the security business undertook the organization of an adjustment of all details of the selling campaign. The work of this and the other committees, all composed of experienced security experts, was not confined to the period of the loan, but commenced several weeks before it was launched, and continued for many weeks after it was closed. A complete system of accountancy, covering all expenditures, was inaugurated. The members of the Dominion Publicity Committee were not only skilled security, but were specially experienced in investment publicity. They worked unremittingly for practically four months upon advertising and publicity devices. Over five million separate pieces of printed matter were prepared and distributed by them throughout Canada. This committee closely co-operated with the newspaper advertising campaign and advised upon all advertisements. The Dominion Business Committee put into effect a Dominion wide system of reporting and recording subscriptions. Over 800,000 subscriptions were handled by the system instituted by this committee. In addition to the above committees, there were provincial executive committees, responsible for thoroughly organizing, directing and carrying on the campaign throughout each province.

"The basis of remuneration to the various firms and individuals whose services had been engaged received most careful consideration, and was made the subject of a special report by Mr. Thomas Bradshaw, Finance Commissioner of the City of Toronto, and an outstanding Canadian authority on security issues, whom the Minister requested to report upon the matter. No rate of commission was paid, the principle adopted being to determine the emolument according to services rendered, results produced, and responsibilities undertaken. The organization which each financial house placed at the disposal of the campaign was regarded as an important factor.

"Mr. Bradshaw, in his report, refers to the case of 75 financial houses whose principals and staffs devoted practically their entire time to the loan. Some of these houses had extensive staffs, which were turned over. One had 48 members engaged, another 39, another 31, and so on. Mr. Bradshaw reports that the value of such equipments, containing years of accumulated experience in the kind of work required in the successful prosecution of such an undertaking, can hardly be estimated. He points out that the time occupied in preparing for the campaign was more than twice that for any previous one, and, further, that after the loan had closed, the members of nearly all the committees were engaged for several months in making adjustments. Investment houses were practically prohibited from engaging in any other business during the last three months of last year. Prior to the issue those engaged were fully occupied in organizing districts, and in selecting training and supervising the work of over ten thousand canvassers, who took part.

"Mr. Bradshaw points out that the entire remuneration of all the professional houses engaged averaged less than one-fifth of one per cent. He reports that, having gone over in detail the amount of remuneration allowed to each house and firm engaged, he is of opinion, having regard to the services rendered and the result obtained, that the remuneration was on a fair and reasonable basis.

"As for the remuneration paid the banks, which played a vital part in handling the loan, the average amount paid for each of the 3,000 branches was \$300. For this remuneration, all applications were received, recorded, and forwarded to Ottawa. Interim certificates were issued, and bonds exchanged, the work being done under great pressure, frequently night as day, over a period of seven months. In addition, the banks will cash for the Government, free of charge, or exchange, all coupons, during the currency of the several issues—that is to say, for 5, 10 and 20 years.

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