

THE SITUATION AND THE OUTLOOK

IV.

FROM FIELD AND FARM

Conditions of the Crops—Mixed Farming is Being Extended—Fruit Growing

Wheat in the western provinces is from six to twelve inches high. Varying conditions prevail. The following opinions relative to agriculture, dairying, fruit culture are of interest at this time.

Crop conditions in Southern Alberta are satisfactory. Seeding of spring wheat, barley and oats is complete. About 75 per cent. of the flax acreage has been sown. Potatoes and sugar beets are above ground. Moisture and growing conditions have never been known to be better. Alfalfa is very promising.

The grain acreage shows an increase of about 10 per cent. and alfalfa about 100 per cent. over last year. In the vicinity of Lethbridge extraordinary interest is manifested this season in mixed farming especially in the irrigated district.

The wool clip in the Lethbridge district has doubled and will exceed one million pounds.

The demand for improved farms is notable at this time. An extraordinary amount of prairie is being broken. With the successful maturing of the spring crop, prosperity is assured, is the report of Mr. J. P. Tracy, the commissioner of commerce and manufactures at Lethbridge, Alta.

Mixed Farming in Central Alberta.

In Central Alberta and the Edmonton district crop conditions appear to be quite up to the average at this time of the year, states Industrial Commissioner Hall, of Edmonton. The winter was mild, spring was fairly early and seeding conditions have been generally good. The Hon. Duncan Marshall, Minister of Agriculture for Alberta, returning from a trip which covered most of the province, said:—

"The crops everywhere are coming along in fine shape and there is no lack of moisture anywhere. The spring wheat is doing exceedingly well and will to all appearances give a good yield."

Alberta is strong on mixed farming, particularly, perhaps in the central and northern parts. Garden crops in and about Edmonton are well to the fore for growth.

Dairying is growing in favor as a means of producing a steady and reliable revenue. Mr. A. A. Metcalfe, who has a herd of 30 cows near Edmonton, sold \$5,460 worth of milk to the Edmonton City Dairy in 1912 and used \$312 worth for his family and for feeding calves. Mr. Metcalfe's herd yielded him \$192.41 per head. Pasture feed is excellent this year and the June flow of milk is quite up to the average for quantity and quality. Milk retails for 10 cents a quart and the dairies pay \$2.40 a hundredweight, delivered at the dairy. This branch of farming is on the increase and new dairy farms are being started. New Zealand butter is sold in Edmonton and all of the cheese sold in this market is produced elsewhere; milk is too costly to be made into cheese.

From Other Districts.

The spring opened up nicely, and with fine weather after the frost had gone, to allow farmers to get their seeding done in good shape, then came a good warm rain followed by the fine warm weather, so that conditions in the vicinity of High River, Alta, so far, have been all that could be desired, suggests Mr. J. S. Jones, secretary of the board of trade, and at present grain and all vegetation is healthy and advancing, and slightly earlier than last year. A small percentage of fall wheat was killed in some locations. Those farmers who have hogs, cattle, chickens, turkeys, etc., are not worrying. What they grow can be readily disposed of at a profit, and in many cases takes its own weight to market.

All things considered, the prospects never looked brighter since the country was opened up. The indications too for more moisture are good and the farmers are pleased inasmuch as one or two more good showers should be sufficient to develop the hard wheat and in fact all the grain. It is evident even to the uninitiated that the 1913 crop around McLeod, Alta, will be one of the best that has been gathered in many years, states Industrial Commissioner Moffatt. There has been expressed the fear that much damage would result from cutworm, and a few isolated cases have been reported.

Conditions for seeding this year have been of the best. With the land in excellent shape after the winter snows and

frost, work was rushed ahead rapidly as soon as the ground was tillable, and practically the whole of the wheat was in before the first rain of the season, is the report from Weyburn, Sask.

Secretary Patton, of Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan Board of Trade, remarks:—"The seeding in the Moose Jaw district commenced a little later this season than last. The farmers report, however, that the wheat crop is doing well. The general opinion is that the crop this year will be as good or better than that of last year.

"There is about twenty per cent. more land under wheat this year than last. The acreage under flax will not be quite so large. The farmers state that it does not pay to raise flax at prevailing prices. Agriculturists generally, are optimistic and say there is enough moisture in the soil at present to protect the seed through a long spell of dry weather."

So far as concerns crop conditions at Saskatoon and its surroundings, they are exceedingly favorable, is the comment of the city's commissioner, Mr. F. Maclure Sclanders. The germination has been remarkably even, and owing to the recent cool spell a splendid root system has formed. Further, the wheat this year appears to have got a good start of the weeds so that our fields will be very clean. This means clean grain and low dockage.

There is more water in the country to-day than has been seen for over twenty-five years. Creeks and sloughs which have long been dry are this year filled to the brim. Such being the case, it is safe to say that even with barely normal weather conditions a large and good crop is practically assured. I consider conditions encouraging.

Movement for Local Market.

Mixed farming in the Kamloops district is still in its infancy as also is fruit raising. However the past two years have shown marked improvement. The district on the uplands south of the city has been rapidly settling up and grain crops are being raised chiefly as yet. The advisability of raising more cattle, hogs, sheep, etc., however, is being forced upon the settlers' attention, and prospects for an improvement along this line, are good.

A movement to secure local market in Kamloops has greatly encouraged the farmers who have had difficulty in disposing of their produce. Besides getting cash for their stuff no difficulty will occur in disposing of any surplus above city's requirements. Thousands of new fruit trees are being set out each year, so that in a very few years there will be a large amount of fruit shipped out from this city.

Ontario Items.

The season so far may be said to have been favorable, thinks Mr. H. W. Baker, commissioner at Ottawa. The weather during seeding was dry and there has since been sufficient moisture to promote growth, although this has not been rapid owing to lack of warmth.

Apples promise to be a medium crop. Plums were injured by frost and will be light, as will also be small fruits from the same cause. The season, although it promised to be earlier, is now rather later than usual. Some market gardeners have suffered considerable loss through setting out plants too early.

In the Ottawa district there has been some injury to fruit trees from caterpillars. On the Central Farm they have been kept under control, thus demonstrating that it is quite practicable to keep them from doing much damage in orchards.

The vegetable growers of Kingston, Ont. district have a strong organization, with Mr. Robert Bushell, as president of the association. The vegetable crop is in very excellent condition, and the prospect of a very large production is favorable.

The Manitoba crop is reported to be coming along quickly, and is said by competent judges to be the best the west has seen for years. If the present conditions hold for a few weeks, a large crop is assured, is the favorable reply of Mr. C. F. Roland, Winnipeg's industrial commissioner.

In the Maritime Provinces.

Since January, 1912, when a large slag fertilizer manufactory started operations in Sydney, N.S., a revival of interest in farming began. Again, as the owners of this fertilizer business have established an experimental farm, the outlook is sure to improve.

The chief possibilities and attainments in connection with farming in the district immediately surrounding Sydney and the South Cape Breton coal fields are the raising of garden truck and maintaining dairies. The farms are of me-

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