

## THE CROP SITUATION.

A representative of THE COMMERCIAL spent last week making a hurried trip throughout Manitoba, with a view to gaining information about the crops. Residents in various sections of Manitoba are energetically claiming that the crops in their particular section are superior this year to any other part of the province. The people of Portage claim that there are no such crops anywhere in Manitoba this year as they have. At Carberry the people are quite positive that there is no other section which will equal theirs. At Deloraine the people exultingly shout that their crops are not equalled elsewhere in Manitoba. At Manitou the residents are satisfied that their crop is just a little superior to the next best section, and so on all over the province the visitor will be met with assertions of this nature, until it becomes amusing to him, if not wearisome.

The fact is, there is a great uniformity in the crops nearly all over Manitoba this year. West of Brandon the yield will not be as heavy as in most other parts, but the general condition is one of uniformity. Of course some sections will certainly produce a larger average yield than others, but there is far less variation than might be expected over such a large area of country. There are no districts which will produce exceedingly large yields, and others very poor. These extremes are not evident this year. The average condition is decidedly good, and the only comparison which can be made is that some districts are somewhat better than the average. The straw is not nearly so heavy as the abnormal growth of last year, but there is a fairly good growth of straw everywhere, and the yield will be greater, in proportion to the bulk of the straw, than last year. There is a good stand, and the heads are heavy and well filled out. Altogether the outlook is encouraging to the most of our farmers, and with favorable weather for a short time to complete stacking and threshing, Manitoba will have a larger quantity of choice wheat than we have had for years. Though we will not have the bulk of grain that was gathered last year, the average quality will be very much better, providing of course for good weather for a short time.

Manitoba has had frost on two nights during the week. The first frost of the season came on Monday morning, August 29. On this night the temperature fell to the frost point at a number of points west of Portage la Prairie. The Red river valley, the Portage district, southern and south-western portions of the province appear not to have been affected. On the following night there was frost again, this time affecting principally the central portion of Southern Manitoba, between Morden and Deloraine. The Portage district was also visited this night. Tuesday was fine and warm and the temperature has remained high since. The Red river valley and some other districts, particularly the large wheat region in the south-western portion of the province, appear to have escaped the frost each night. The observatory at Winnipeg reported the lowest temperature at 40 on Monday morning, and 41 on Tuesday morning, which is well above the danger mark, and is sufficient evidence that

there has been no frost in the Winnipeg district.

As the trip of THE COMMERCIAL representative was made after the frost, it will be the more interesting. The Portage la Prairie district was visited on Monday, August 29, which was previous to the frost in that section, but after the frost had been felt at points west of Portage. Not over half the crop was cut in the Portage district up to Monday, but the most of the grain standing was far enough advanced to be fit to cut, though there were some fields on the green side. The crop is heavy here, and if the standing portion has not been damaged, the yield for the district will be very large. As tender garden stuff only shows signs of frost in patches here and there, it is hoped the standing wheat has largely escaped, as it was so near ripe that it would stand a considerable degree of frost without injury. West of Portage the crop was further advanced, and it is estimated that not far from 75 per cent. of the wheat was cut previous to the frost. The balance was nearly all far enough matured to be fit to cut and some uncut patches were dead ripe and would therefore not be injured. From the railway train the uncut portion of the crop appeared to be mostly oats, which would not be injured at all by a light frost. The severity of the frost is variously estimated at from one to three degrees. Potato vines as a rule did not show any traces of frost along the railway between Portage and Brandon, and it is therefore hoped that the uncut wheat has not been injured. But allowing that it has been affected, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the crop may be considered as safe, being either cut or quite ripe. The most of the balance would be so nearly ripe, that even if injured it would still make a fairly good sample of wheat. At Brandon the experimental farm was visited. At the farm the thermometer registered  $2\frac{1}{2}$  degrees of frost on Monday, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  degree on Tuesday morning. Instruments on the uplands registered the same as in the valley. Beans in the valley, where the frost is usually more severe than on the upland, showed traces of damage, but potatoes, balsams and other tender plants showed no injury. This being the case, the manager was hopeful that the wheat had escaped.

From Brandon the Souris branch was taken. Along this railway a still greater proportion of the wheat was cut, and southwest from Souris village, wheat cutting was practically finished. Beyond Souris it was generally claimed that there had been no frost, but if there had, there was very little crop uncut to be injured. Garden stuff as a rule showed no trace of frost along this line. In one very low spot potatoes appeared to be affected. Stacking was going on along the line in some parts. The important wheat country served by the Souris branch may be considered safe.

Taking the Deloraine branch eastward, at Deloraine it was declared that there had been no frost, the drop in the temperature having stopped at barely the frost mark. The crops were heavy here, and nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  cut, and may be considered pretty safe in this important district. Some late patches may be affected. Eastward from Deloraine a smaller percentage of the crop was cut, the portion cut previous to the frost being placed at from 25 to 50 per

cent. at different points. Statements as to the severity of the frost vary very materially, being stated mostly at one to three degrees, and at two or three points in excess of this. About Manitou there appeared to be more wheat cut than at some points west. At Thornhill there seemed to be a considerable portion of the crop uncut. It is expected that more or less damage has been done along the Deloraine branch, between Morden and Deloraine. Potato vines show the frost in a good many instances, but frequently they did not appear to be affected. Most of the wheat standing was sufficiently advanced to be fit to cut, so that allowing that it has been injured, it will still be a fair to good sample. Where potato vines were not affected it is reasonable to suppose that the wheat has escaped, and even allowing for the worst, there will be a large proportion of thoroughly sound wheat in this section of the country. Along the Deloraine branch a new flour mill is being erected at Killarney, and Harrison Bros. are building a 25,000 bushel elevator at Holmfild. About Morden it was claimed that about all the wheat was cut and safe from danger of frost. Coming eastward from Morden into the Red river valley country, all the grain crops were cut, and stacking was going on actively. Stacks were beginning to dot the prairie, and in several instances fall plowing of stubble land was going on. This fairly gives the Red river valley country the palm for early harvesting this year at least, as here only was stubble plowing observed. Through the level Mennonite country it was one vast sea of grain stacks, as far as the eye could reach in the clear prairie atmosphere, broken only by the spots which had been cleared of stacks, to place the grain in stack, while at a few spots the black soil was being turned up by the plow. The industrious Mennonites have by their industry shown what the oft despised Red river lands are capable of producing, and from a flat and uninviting prairie, they have made their district the admiration of the visitor. The residents of different sections may boast as they will of the advantages of their respective localities, but no more enchanting scene from the agricultural point of view can be found in Manitoba, than the vast sea of wheat stacks which covered the level prairie of the Mennonite district of the Red River valley.

Northward to Winnipeg from Gretna the grain appeared to be all cut, and even if there had been any frost in this region, it would have come to late to injure the grain crop. At one point in the Red river country some new wheat, of fine sample, had already been marketed, which was the first new wheat brought in anywhere in the province, so far as heard from.

## THE EXPERIMENTAL FARM.

While waiting for train connection at Brandon on Tuesday last, a representative of THE COMMERCIAL paid a brief visit to the Manitoba experimental farm at that place, and was courteously shown over the premises by Manager Bedford. The farm is located just across the Assiniboine river from Brandon, and is reached by a splendid gravel road, which would do credit to any rural district of Canada. The farm itself is located partly in the valley of the