

The West Preparing for Work

Calgary Sale of Livestock—Rural Credit Deadlock Will Hold
Development Up—Special Freight Rates for Coal
April to August—U.S. Immigrants

By E. CORA HIND.

Calgary, Alberta, April 1.—The west has just about recovered its breath after the recent tremendous blizzard. Thawing has been rapid, alternating with days of heavy frost, and all the damage done by the great storm has not yet been fully accounted for.

Calgary this week is taken up with the annual spring horse show and bull sale and there is a large attendance of farmers and ranchers both from all parts of Alberta and the more western parts of Saskatchewan. This is the bull sale par excellence for ranchers to supply their needs or dispose of their surplus bulls, and the numbers disposed and price paid is regarded as an excellent indication of the trend of opinion on conditions for the coming season.

The sale has been on only for one day. The numbers of bulls offered is smaller than last year, but the quality is better and the average of price somewhat higher. So that while feed is still painfully scarce the outlook so far as livestock is concerned would appear to be healthy. The high point of the sale was \$1010 which is a very handsome price for a bull to be used on the range.

Queried as to the losses from recent storm the ranchers state that while it will be impossible to tell the extent of loss until the spring round up, they are convinced it has not been so heavy as was at first feared. They express apprehension, however, for the range cows at calving time, as many of them are weak from insufficient feed and they are figuring on a considerably limited calf crop.

So far as the question of farm help is concerned they make exactly the same statement as the farmers and ranchers of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, namely, that they will not attempt to pay the exorbitant wages asked and that where possible they will only employ one or at most two men, and will put in such crops as they can care for with that limited amount of help and let the balance of the land go.

There seems to be very little apprehension on the score of moisture this year, as while the rainfall last autumn was light there were one or two heavy snowfalls which melted before the ground became frozen and the snowfall throughout the winter has been heaviest for some years. At present large sections of Alberta are covered with water where snow has melted and owing to the cold weather has not yet been absorbed.

Livestock men are generally looking forward with much eagerness to the livestock shippers contract which is to be drafted by Dr. J. G. Rutherford of the Railway Commission. The regulations under which livestock can be shipped, as been a bone of contention for many years. Dr. Rutherford, as an old westerner and equally conversant with the troubles of the shippers and the carriers, is felt to be the one man in Canada fitted to adequately deal with the situation and draft a contract that will be acceptable and equitable both to shippers and carriers.

Rural Credits.

The deadlock between the banks and the rural credit societies in Manitoba appears to be permanent. Without attempting to apportion the blame, as there are possibly faults on both sides, it is safe to say that the refusal of the banks to loan money to the societies could not have come at a more unfortunate time. The main object of the rural credits societies was to furnish

lines of credit for seasonal work, and practically every one of the sixty societies in Manitoba had a large number of applications for loans on land. Many of these loans had been approved and the would be borrowers notified of that approval and these men having, as they have every right to believe, secured their line of credit have been depending upon these loans to supply money for various lines of spring work, purchase of additional implements, seed, etc.

Not only are these men disappointed, but districts where they had asked to have societies formed following the convention in Winnipeg last January are disappointed also. There is no doubt the societies will be granted the power to take deposits and in the end will secure funds, but it is highly improbable that this can be done in time to meet the needs of the present season. The lack of these lines of credit will undoubtedly have its effect on lessening the acreage which will be seeded.

Freight Rates for Coal.

The various coal operators, association of Alberta have taken definite action along the line of seeking lower freight rates for the moving of coal in the months from April to August.

Mine operators claim that coal can be much more economically mined during these months than during the winter, but that owing to the fact that dealers, especially in Manitoba, do not attempt to store domestic coal during those months frequently the mines are wholly idle or only operating on part time.

This is a season also when freight is lighter than during the months when the grain movement is on. The substance of the resolutions adopted at recent meetings of the coal mine operators is to the effect that "the railway board considers the advisability of fixing a lower freight rate on shipments of coal from Alberta and Crow's Nest Pass mines to points in Saskatchewan and Manitoba during the months of April to August, both inclusive thereby inducing the stocking of coal during these months and lessening the rush of coal shipments during the period necessarily devoted to the movement of grain."

The outcome of these negotiations will be awaited with much interest by prairie dwellers both urban and suburban, as the menace of coal shortage owing to labor troubles both in Canada and the United States in the early part of the present season is still very vividly in mind. If stocks of coal were accumulated at the large centres during these off months it would lessen the danger of suffering should strikes come in the future during cold weather.

Building Outlook Depressing

The path of contractors and builders and of such of the public as require and must have, new houses is not to be without its thorns. With lumberjacks asking \$5 per day for an eight hour day and plasterers demanding \$1.00 an hour for an eight hour day, building is something that cannot be undertaken lightly or unadvisedly, more especially as every other branch of the building trade is equally modest in the matter of wages.

Immigration from the United States is beginning to move, and already several parties have arrived, notably a number going into the southern part of Manitoba, one of the oldest and best districts in the province. Last fall many of the old time residents sold their farms owing to the

difficulty in securing help. The settlers coming in are well-to-do and have paid good prices for the land, but it is a matter of regret to note the very large number of German names occurring on the lists. It is reported that all of them speak English, but evidently a large percentage of them are of German extraction. One party alone which arrived recently has acquired 64,000 acres of land in southwestern Manitoba. These people all come from the county of Levingstone, in the state of Illinois. One large party has been brought in by the Sterns-Joerndt-Fonger Company. In addition to those with German names there is a goodly percentage of such Irish names as Cavanagh, Mulholland and Fogarty. The sons of very many of the original holders of these farms are buried in France and Flanders, and the men who had been forty years on their farms felt unequal to the strain of continuing in view of the present labor unrest and exorbitant prices asked for farm help and the very unsatisfactory quality that was obtainable last season.

It would be interesting to know how much actual supervision the Dominion Department of Immigration is exercising in the matter of immigrants coming into Canada. Of course, these people who are coming now are coming by purchase and are well equipped so far as farm machinery, etc., is concerned. Physically, they are a sturdy, well-to-do looking class of settlers and most of them have from three to four children. Very few of them however are native born Americans of English-speaking descent. There is at present a very active propaganda originating in Alberta and being taken up by business men in the three western provinces with a view to increasing immigration, and there is no doubt that strenuous efforts will be made to induce settlers to come in during the present year. It is sincerely to be hoped that in the eagerness to secure new settlers to develop the country the lessons of the past with regard to those of foreign birth will not be forgotten.

Red's Strategy in Winnipeg.

Winnipeg continues to be hampered by the condition of her council which has only the mayor's vote to decide between the ultra-radical-labor and that section of the council which represents the citizens at large. When Winnipeg wishes to amend her charter she has to apply to the provincial government and such application has been made to the legislature now in session.

The extreme Reds are asking to secure adult suffrage. The Citizens' Committee, which fairly represents all but the extreme radicals, has asked to have the city divided into three large wards and for a system of proportional representation to be adopted. At the present time with the number of small wards, the reds are able to control the north end of the city where a large proportion of the foreign population are located, while the three southern wards have no more representation in the council than the north, although they have a voting population about twice as large. If the wards were reduced from 7 to 3, with the adoption of proportional representation, it would increase the membership of the council from fourteen to eighteen and would insure a representation in exact conformity with the views of the electors. The Reds are smart enough to realize that if this was done, while the whole city would be better represented, they would have a very much less opportunity of controlling the council, and have "drawn a herring across the trail" and ask that adult suffrage in civic matters should come before anything else. While the present council is in power Winnipeg is evidently destined to have nothing but wrangling and discord and very little progressive work can possibly be done. Such serious problems as housing and the like are not receiving at all the attention which they should, and the outlook in this particular for the coming season is most unsatisfactory.