

property of the Hudson's Bay Co., and though the officers of the company, at great inconvenience to themselves, act as ferrymen, this privilege might be withdrawn at any time, or the boat drift down stream. There is no other boat within fifty miles of this point. Horses must always swim the river and the landing on the south side is dangerous when the water is high.

Spirit river.

There is a wagon road from Dunvegan to Spirit river a distance of fifteen miles. The ascent from the river-valley is gradual, the distance to the plateau by the trail being about seven miles. From the edge of the plateau to Spirit river (Ghost river on the maps) the trail runs through an almost level country. Two days were spent at Spirit river at this time and four days near the end of August. The river was first reached from the north; our route from there was towards the west; we returned to it from the south and finally left it going towards the east. Every farm and piece of breaking was visited and I was fortunate enough to meet and talk with nearly every settler. The area of the Spirit river prairie is difficult to determine, as it is much broken by bluffs of poplar and willow and thickets of service-berry and other bushes, but at the outside estimate there are not more than 60,000 acres fit for immediate settlement and the quantity is probably less than that amount. Spirit "river" is a small creek two or three yards in width and without water in the autumn of very dry seasons. The soil varies in depth and quality, but the best land is within a mile or so of the creek and north in the direction of Peace river; towards the south and west the soil is shallower and the drainage not so good. About twenty homesteads have been located, all but two or three on the creek, though no surveys have yet been made. Mr. Charles Bremner has been settled there for many years, but he has confined his farming operations principally to raising cattle, oats and vegetables, as there is no grist-mill within reach and such wheat as has been planted has only been by way of experiment. Part of his wheat was frozen in 1902 and I was told that in 1901 his small crop was harvested. In 1903 barley and wheat had headed on August 2nd. When I left Spirit river, August 27th, Mr. Bremner's grain was riper than any other in the vicinity, barley 6-rowed, 2-rowed and hull-less was fit to cut and the wheat turning yellow; oats were nearly ripe on one or two farms, but with these exceptions no other grain seemed as if it would reach maturity. A rather dry June delayed growth at that time and a cold cloudy August with frequent rain prevented the ripening of grain. With the exception of Bremner's field and two or three others near it, all the grain planted in 1903 was on new "breaking". Altogether there were perhaps 200 acres under culti-

Condition of
the crops.