

## WESTERN LABOR SITUATION IS GOOD

### Encouraging Reports from the Prairie Provinces— Ontario's Effort for Greater Production

That the western provinces will not lack labor for seeding and that the crop acreage in many districts will be as large as last year, are the reports received by Mr. E. M. Saunders, treasurer of the Canada Life Assurance Company, from the western branch managers of the company's investment department. The Dominion government's immigration department, the department of labor, and other organizations have helped to bring about this satisfactory condition. Much of the farm labor is coming from the United States, and many of these laborers will probably take up homesteads here.

In Winnipeg and Manitoba generally, a number of committees were formed to handle the situation and considerable success has been met. In some districts, where labor scarcity has not been overcome, the shortage will be counteracted by oat seeding, that is to say, as much wheat will be put in as possible during its season; then there will be more labor available for completing the acreage in oats and barley.

Mr. W. J. Rattray, manager of the Canada Life's investment department at Regina, reports that there appears to be no lack of labor in his vicinity. He draws attention to a letter of Mr. L. T. McDonald, commissioner at Regina, who explains that in February each year the local board of trade co-operate with the Saskatchewan labor department, the Dominion immigration department and the labor organizations in the city. They then appeal to the railway companies for a reduced rate and advertise in the United States and in Canada for men. Help is brought from the lumber camps, the north country, the homesteads and from the Southern states, and considerable labor is secured from the cities, towns and villages throughout the province. The Dominion government's labor department have agents in the United States, Eastern Canada, British Columbia and the prairie provinces securing men for the western farms. This department states that the labor situation is well in hand and that sufficient help is being secured to seed a very large acreage.

#### As Large as Last Year.

Mr. J. W. Maguire, the company's investment manager in Saskatoon, says that in the northern portion of Saskatchewan there will probably be as large an acreage in crop this year as last. "The shortage of help will not be so acute as expected," he reports, "owing to the action of the Dominion government in allowing homesteaders to assist in putting in crop, such time counting as actual residence on homestead; also owing to the fact that a considerable number of men have arrived from the States and from British Columbia. Many farmers who in past years were content to do chores will drive an outfit this spring, and the younger members of the family will also assist to a greater extent than formerly."

"The spring will not be early, but in all probability will be early enough. We have had no spring weather yet, the winds being cold, and, although most of the snow has disappeared in the city, there is little sign of it going in the country. This, to my mind, is just as well, as in all probability it will disappear in a very short time when the warm weather comes, and grain sown within a reasonable time afterwards will, owing to the moisture in the ground, germinate at once and there will be no likelihood of second growth."

#### Men from States in Alberta.

In Alberta, the matter is also well in hand. Mr. S. J. Thorburn, assistant to Mr. H. E. W. Phair, the company's investment manager in Edmonton, says that the local board of trade have taken up with the Dominion government the matter of securing labor from the United States. Through this source they are endeavoring to secure 2,500 men for farm labor in Alberta. Up to April 1st, 800 men had been sent out from the provincial employment offices to assist the farmers of Alberta in the spring seeding. Many of those who have gone from Edmonton are homesteaders from the northern portions of the province, but the majority are from the States of Minnesota, North Dakota and Wisconsin. "They are all husky chaps with farm experience," says Mr. R. J. Daley, deputy publicity commissioner, Edmonton, "and what is most striking is their eagerness for information in relation to homesteads. They are coming here with a two-

fold object: to get work now and locate a place with a view to settlement later."

Mr. Daley stated that there had been a steady stream since the office was opened, "but," he added, "the supply is only beginning to come our way. Agents in the United States have notified the men that they would not be required before April 1st. Information has been received that a number are coming from Spokane. This is the first year the one cent rate has been granted from this point."

In British Columbia plans are being discussed to try and induce the city labor to assist in the fruit harvest of that province.

#### Well Organized Scheme in Ontario.

In Ontario, the farmers will have the benefit of considerable labor from the cities. Several thousands of high school boys are likely to help. In Toronto particularly, a well-organized movement is in hand, under the auspices of the Toronto board of trade in co-operation with the provincial organization of resources committee, to get labor for farms. A number of firms are granting their employees three weeks' holiday, with full pay, the farmer paying in addition \$1.10 a day. It is known that there are hundreds of men in civilian employment who can plough and thousands who can handle a team in seeding, harrowing, rolling, etc. They are county-bred, and now to be found in such occupations as teamsters, delivery drivers, carters, stablemen, porters, packers, bank messengers, gardeners, golf club employees. An appeal is being made that these men should be loaned to the State while the ploughing season lasts. This is important at the present time. Later men will be needed for general farm work and for harvesting. While many have been sceptical as to the practical results of the scheme of the Toronto board of trade, it is so well organized that the effort will prove an important factor in the maintenance of substantial production in Ontario.

## CANADA'S BANK CLEARINGS

The following are the returns of Canada's bank clearing houses for the weeks ended April 5th, 1917, and April 6th, 1916, with changes:—

	Week ended April 5, '17.	Week ended April 6, '16.	Changes.
Montreal .....	\$ 71,606,189	\$ 65,923,475	+ \$ 5,682,714
Toronto .....	53,548,356	46,953,734	+ 6,594,622
Winnipeg .....	45,260,106	33,397,411	+ 11,862,695
Vancouver .....	6,150,628	5,532,109	+ 618,519
Ottawa .....	5,838,456	5,091,450	+ 737,006
Calgary .....	6,450,561	4,173,339	+ 2,277,222
Hamilton .....	4,670,258	4,248,839	+ 421,419
Quebec .....	4,222,915	3,731,691	+ 491,224
Edmonton .....	2,568,605	2,422,654	+ 145,951
Halifax .....	2,666,393	2,185,016	+ 481,377
London .....	2,548,128	2,211,221	+ 336,907
Regina .....	3,010,399	1,779,543	+ 1,240,856
St. John .....	2,144,611	1,746,188	+ 398,423
Victoria .....	1,433,437	1,299,841	+ 133,596
Saskatoon .....	1,689,821	1,186,916	+ 502,905
Moose Jaw .....	1,119,367	830,495	+ 288,872
Brandon .....	532,155	513,603	+ 18,552
Brantford .....	864,540	636,452	+ 228,088
Fort William .....	553,962	442,296	+ 111,666
Lethbridge .....	781,864	528,812	+ 253,052
Medicine Hat .....	560,806	376,748	+ 184,058
New Westminster ..	246,463	251,014	— 4,551
Peterboro .....	643,709	413,701	+ 230,008
Sherbrooke .....	663,194	519,604	+ 143,590
Totals .....	\$219,774,923	\$186,396,152	+ \$33,378,771
Kitchener .....	640,657		

Toronto's bank clearings for the week ended April 12 were \$44,630,470, and for the same period last year \$43,616,392, and in 1915 \$37,547,258.

The notable allied victories of the past week have had a marked effect on the foreign exchange market in New York, where early in the week, was an advance in demand sterling to 4.76, the highest figure quoted since May of last year. Cables were reported at 4.76 15-16. French exchange improved about 1 centime to 5.67 for cables and 5.68 for cheques.