

## ECHOES FROM THE WEST

### The Success of the Canadian West is Assured

By W. WHYTE,

2nd Vice-Pres. Canadian Pacific Ry.,  
Winnipeg.

It took many years for the people of the United States, and, strangely enough, for the people of Eastern Canada, to realize that Western Canada was rich in possibilities. But at length the country wrung from them a reluctant recognition of its merits.

Now what do we see? In the last ten years three quarters of a million of new settlers came into Canada, a large majority of whom made their homes in the West. But it was not until 1903 that our immigration figures attracted wide-spread attention, at which time the returns showed an increase of practically one hundred per cent. over the returns of the preceding twelve months. Would you know the meaning of the sudden growth? Go talk to the farmer who had the courage to grasp the skirts of happy chance and to cut loose from old conditions. He will tell you that a country with the soil and climate of Western Canada cannot be "kept down"—that is, so long as the world needs wheat, Western Canada must grow. "The fellows who came first took the chance," he will add, "they did not know. Now it is not a matter of experiment—it's the case of goods that have made good."

The answer is a simple one. Western Canada was the merchant with goods to sell. The world would not buy. Here and there some men, pluckier than the rest, experimented. Others followed. Then came the rush—the goods were found to be as advertised. What was the result? New cities and a new people, and over the Prairie West an ever widening ribbon of wheat. But we are only at the beginning. When the significance of the fact that Canada has approximately two hundred million acres of land upon which wheat may be grown—five times as much wheat land as is now cultivated in the United States—when this fact, I say, is thoroughly understood, people will begin really to appreciate our possibilities. When all our land is under cultivation we shall be able to supply the greater part of the European demand and to aid in feeding the United States.

The transportation facilities must keep pace with agricultural development—when our stupendous wheat crops are ready for the market we must be equipped to move them. Railroad building in the wheat belt must and will go steadily on, for construction now is not a matter of experiment.

We know that we shall have the settlers as soon as the lines are built. Indeed, they begin to buy before the tracks are laid, and we are finding that our branch roads pay from the very start. The farmers know that they will get the roads and they are going ahead and taking out homesteads on faith.

Another market for our wheat will be found in Japan and the Orient. We are already trading largely with Japan and expect a steady increase. The Japanese at present might be classified as a nation of rice eaters, but they will become wheat eaters and meat eaters also. Alberta, which produced something like two million bushels of wheat last year has already made some shipments of wheat to

Japan. This wheat is the Turkey Red variety and comes from seed imported from Kansas, but which is superior to the Kansas wheat and will make more pounds of flour to the barrel. With the growth of this product we shall probably have a large shipment to Japan, not only on account of its superior quality, but because of the low freight rate which we can make to the Pacific and the Orient.

But do not be misled into thinking for a moment that the Canadian West is entirely dependent upon wheat for its success. To make this assertion would be as foolish as to contend that Illinois and Iowa, the two greatest corn States in the Union, are entirely dependent upon corn for their success.

A large part of Alberta and Saskatchewan is adapted to mixed farming and grazing. The Edmonton district is a great dairy country, and it is now producing butter for British Columbia and the Western markets. Many settlers from the States, especially Pennsylvania and Ohio people, are settling there. They have big barns just as they had in the United States. And the oats they produce! Wait a minute—you have seen what we call the "load lines" on box cars? Yes. Well, the load line restricts the capacity of the car, according to the weight of the material to be carried. We had trouble with hot journal boxes—lots of trouble. We could not understand. Finally we found the cause. The load line capacity had been figured on a basis of oats weighing thirty-four pounds to the bushel. The Edmonton oats weighed more.

I myself know farmers who grow from eighty to one hundred bushels to the acre and the grain weighs forty to forty-six pounds to the bushel. Here also may be found the barley and other grains, while Timothy grows as high as a man. It is not so cold near the Rockies as farther east, and in some respects the region warmed by the Chinook winds is more desirable for settlement than the wheat belt proper.

Before the Canadian Pacific Railroad undertook its irrigation project at Calgary, this region was considered primarily as a ranching country. Many cattlemen from Montana and the Western States came into this district and met with great success. Some of these men built up large fortunes, and Canada found that she had a group of cattle kings, so familiar a type in the early history of Colorado, Montana and Wyoming.

With the growth of cattle raising and ranching, packing houses were established, and Moose Jaw and Calgary are well known as centres of this industry. But land upon which bumper crops of wheat could be raised, land which, when properly irrigated, yielded enormous returns in sugar beets, alfalfa and hay of all kinds, was far too valuable to be used as range for cattlemen. The homesteader and the small farmer, allured by these phenomenal yields, encroached on their territory and the ranchers were forced farther away all the time. Calgary is changing—has changed already—from a ranching centre to an agricultural and industrial centre.

However, there are thousands and thousands of acres of available grazing lands which in the future will nourish and sustain innumerable herds of beef and dairy cattle. The picturesque scenes of the western

part of the United States will be re-enacted on as large, if not on a larger scale in Western Canada. But instead of branding and rounding up small, active, long-horned Texas steers, Canadians will rope and brand big, fleshy Polled Angus and Shorthorn steers—not so exciting a work, perhaps, but infinitely more profitable.

British Columbia promises a development parallel to the States of Washington and Oregon. It has many valleys which can be irrigated and which will produce the finest of apples, peaches, pears and plums. This region is just opening up. Canada's coal fields have scarcely been scratched with the pick. Lumber will be available for years after the supply in the United States has been exhausted.

Canada is great. Her wheat crops, immense now, will in future be prodigious. But when we have told the story of the wheat we have by no means told the story of the Canadian West.

### Live Stock in the West

The live stock interests of the West cannot but be very much affected by the condition of the present winter. Great changes were taking place and were likely to take place in any case, but the terrible severity of this winter will very much hasten them. The larger ranches were being supplanted by smaller ones on which the cattle could be better looked after than where the numbers were greater than, say, three or four hundred head.

Several reasons for this may be given. The demand for homesteads, breaking up the leases in many places, thus curtailing the ranges previously occupied, and the fact that ranching as it has been carried on, has very seldom been at all profitable. This, I think, one of the principal reasons why the larger ranchmen are so willing to make the change.

Alberta was never adapted for ranching, as it has been considered. The winters are too long and too severe. There have been winters when cattle did very well, and the losses were not very great in the actual number of deaths among them, yet the years of severe weather are so many that the gain can seldom overtake the loss. Then, again, the loss cannot be all counted in the number that die. The shrinking and stunting of those that survive is probably a greater loss than the deaths. When, as was the case in 1904 and 1905, the cattle had not recovered sufficiently from the winter's hardship to be in condition to ship, and had to be sold at great sacrifice or held over another year. The mild and pleasant winter of 1906, followed by plenty of grass, while exceptional, was a great relief to the cattlemen; practically everything, including many steers 5 years old or more, were disposed of, and though the prices were kept too low (the ranchers say, by a combination of buyers), the sales netted them a lot of money.

The prospect for a large shipment of well fed cattle to any outside port during the present year is very small. Generally only the younger cattle were left on hand; not many over three years old. These cattle usually do not stand the winter so well as older ones, and this terrible season has reduced them to almost skeletons, so that under the most favorable conditions the number fit for shipment will be very small, compared with last year.

The local demand for beef is rapid-