

WINNIPEG SECTION

330 SMITH STREET.

Phone 5758.

Representatives:

Amalgamated Press of Canada

In Association with

The Market Record and The Daily Grain Letter.

CROP REPORTS SATISFACTORY.

News from the West is Good—Frost is the Only Fear—Western Progress.

Monetary Times' Office,
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The inquiry into the beef trade of Western Canada concluded after a lengthy session, and the acquisition of a voluminous amount of valuable information. The City Council is backed up, not only by the community, but by the Retail Meat Association of Western Canada, in its desire for the establishment of a public abattoir with cold storage equipment. The retail butchers state they will support such a public utility, believing that a public cattle market and abattoir will be the salvation of the meat trade in this city, providing as it will farmers with a competitive market where butchers and dealers can buy at first hand, thereby eliminating the large profits now made by the wholesalers and abattoirs, and enabling the retail men to sell more cheaply to the consumer, and finally ending in a large benefit to both the producer and the consumer.

Ranch Reports Satisfactory.

Reports from the ranching districts say that the cattle are in splendid shape, and heavy shipments are being made for the eastern market and export. After the severe winter and spring it was feared that there would be a decline in the number of steers for shipments. Prices are above those of last year, and in some districts cattlemen report good profits. The home consumption of meat has grown to enormous dimensions, principally through the large quantities required for the regiments of men employed in railway construction and other outside contracts.

Since the close of Winnipeg Exhibition, Fall Fairs have been conducted at all the principal towns in the West—Brandon, Killarney, Edmonton, Strathcona, and at hundreds of other similar centres. At all these fairs a marked improvement was shown on the class of cattle and horses exhibited. A greater number of entries was shown at three-fifths of the fairs held, and a noticeable increase in interest is being taken from year to year by a wider circle of farmers in their local shows.

It is hardly possible, without attending some of these fairs, to realize in this western country the progress that has been made during the past four or five years in the improvement of the live stock. Animals of better blood are imported, and the young stock shows to better advantage. The great value of this to our country cannot be quite realized at present, but in a very few years Western raised animals will be seen at all fairs competing with Eastern raised stock.

Western Canada in Good Shape.

To my mind the West was never in better shape than at present. Speculation is completely dead; legitimate business receives much more attention; resources are carefully husbanded, and wheat prices were never better. The crop prospects are excellent, barring heavy frost. Railway and other construction brings in an enormous amount of money to be distributed from the labourer to the wholesale man.

The development of the country is so rapid that it requires a considerable sum to provide for its needs, and this is not forthcoming. The new crop will to a large extent meet all the requirements, but it will take from three to four months before that money gets into circulation, and firms are naturally holding back to see what the exact yield of the crop will be. The position taken up by some of the Eastern houses is very disheartening to the managers of their branches here and throughout the West. They should do all to help their customers who are sound and require goods.

There is no real need to apprehend a crop failure, and next spring will see a very active season throughout Western Canada. Such corporations as the C.P.R. and C.N.R. consider the position of the country as excellent, and they are sparing neither effort nor cash in carrying out the plans which they set before them two years ago. All lines of business are affected by the tight money situation, but no 1882 disaster is anticipated in any quarter.

Conditions Will Right Themselves.

Western business men are agreed that conditions will right themselves this fall and the coming spring, and that the country will be in a more prosperous condition in the years to come than it ever was before, as banks will prevent

a repetition of speculative and inflated prices in land, and business men will pay more attention to their own line. Probably tight money has been a blessing in disguise.

The West is "taking time by the forelock," and making provision in case of a fuel shortage in the coming winter. Small towns in various parts have ordered heavy supplies to come forward from the mines at an early date, and the latest move on the part of the city of Winnipeg is to obtain a location on which a supply of wood can be stored. The Trades and Labour Council were active in an agitation for the city to buy several thousand cars of cordwood to be kept in case of shortage, and sold to the citizens practically at cost price.

The Winnipeg water supply is still obtained from the artesian wells, and well No. 5 will soon be in operation, with a pumping capacity of 2½ million gallons daily. The trouble with the Winnipeg artesian supply is that no sooner is one well set agoing than the flow from the others immediately decreases.

For builders in Winnipeg and the lesser cities of the West this has been a dull year. Several large warehouses have been erected in Winnipeg, but our building permits will not exceed much more than half of last year. All other western towns are experiencing the same inactivity in the building trade, but the growth, although less this year, is nevertheless of a very substantial nature.

Speculation is Dead.

Speculation in real estate is a thing of the past, but good legitimate sales are taking place every day, showing little or no depreciation in the value of property. Many firms carrying a large amount of outside property will simply drop their cash, but inside vacant or revenue bearing real estate is all right. The optimists see a good move in active real estate this coming late fall or early spring. Whether their predictions will come right or not is a matter for conjecture. Rents are slightly decreasing, and a marked difference will be seen if the present money stringency continues.

Barley and oats are daily falling before the knife. Samples now arriving of the grain cut show no damage either from wet weather or frost, and a great deal of even later grain will be harvested in the same condition. We cannot miss having some frosted wheat, and up to the present my estimate is around 5 million bushels as being damaged out of a crop of about 83 million bushels. Sizing up the general situation, grain men, and bankers and others feel confident that the farmer is to receive a long price for his wheat this fall and next spring.

At the present time cash wheat is in slow demand owing to our prices being above export. Millers would do well to secure a good supply of the old wheat for the coming milling season. It is estimated that there is still in Canada about 17 or 20 million bushels of last year's grain. This will be carried over till October if the export does not increase, as the carrying charges are provided for in the spread between October and cash wheat.

Some Crop Reports.

Last week a special train left Winnipeg to travel through the country and visit all large wheat shipping points in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The Monetary Times accompanied the party part of the journey, and found that the crops in every centre visited were much better than anticipated. On the M. and N.W. branch of the Canadian Pacific the crops are in excellent condition, showing no signs of frost damage, only they are still green; and many fields inspected round Yorkton will yield from 35 to 45 bushels per acre. Oats are in abundance; some fields seen will yield over 70 bushels per acre. This is not general in every district, where the wheat crop is light, and a yield of from 15 to 20 bushels will be the most harvested.

Many centres along this railway, which in previous years had frost damage at an earlier date than this, have escaped all damage so far, and a great number of the farmers do not expect to have any trouble, although all are agreed that it is an exceptionally late season, and should a heavy black frost come the wheat and barley will both suffer great damage. Crops in general in other districts average round from 22 to 25 bushels to the acre. The country looks prosperous, and a great deal of summer fallow has been carried out.

Last year Yorkton shipped about 1,800,000 bushels of wheat. In connection with Yorkton it may be stated that the most up-to-date brickworks in the West has just commenced operations there. It is owned and worked by the Doukhobours, and has a capacity of 50,000 bricks per day, sufficient to supply hundreds of miles of the territory round Yorkton.

As we advance into our harvest the pessimist quietly disappears, and now all are agreed that Western Canada will produce a fair crop, while with favourable weather for the next ten days, there is the possibility of one of the largest crops ever harvested here being cut. My estimate in the past has been from 80 to 85 millions; it may be larger.