

WINNIPEG SECTION

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Representatives:
Amalgamated Press of Canada
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WESTERN FINANCE.

Money, the Crops, and Business—Transportation Service—Street Railway for Edmonton.

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With the exception of Friday night, the West has enjoyed a period of the most excellent weather ever seen in Western Canada at this time of the year. All grain has now been cut and stooked, and about one-fourth of the crop has been threshed. The percentage of grade wheat No. 3 Northern and, better is still very high—from 60 to 70 per cent.—and prices, though not holding the close of a week ago, are still very good, even feed wheat selling higher than last year's No. 1 hard.

Farmers Advised to Market.

Owing to the money stringency throughout Western Canada, a great number of the retail merchants were unable to meet their bills to the wholesale men, and they in turn would experience some difficulty unless the crop movement eased the financial position. The Board of Trade took the matter up at their regular meeting last week, and passed a resolution that, although it was contrary to their usage to offer advice as to the disposition of the crop, yet, in view of the present good prices and the large quantity of low-grade wheat, the board considered it in the interests of farmers and the country generally that farmers should market early, taking advantage of the good prices now prevailing; and giving as further reason the extreme stringency in the money market, which makes it necessary that all liabilities should be liquidated as speedily as possible, and that this could only be accomplished by the prompt disposal of the grain crop. The board hoped that farmers and the railway companies would combine to remove, if possible, the whole of the low-grade grain before the close of navigation.

The Board of Trade have been the means of obtaining from the railway companies a change in the weight regulations in connection with low-grade and light grains. Until 1st December, 1907, when cars are loaded to their full visible capacity and show an out-turn less than 60,000 pounds, only the actual weight will be charged, subject to a minimum of 40,000 pounds for oats and 50,000 for wheat, barley, flaxseed, rye, and speltz. This means a considerable saving to the Western farmer, who, under present conditions, would be charged 60,000 pounds freight rate while his low-grade grain might not weigh 50,000.

Complaints as to Car Shortage.

Assurances have been given in the past by the railway companies that a sufficient car service would be in operation for the moving of the present crop. Under the most favorable circumstances as regards climatic conditions, they, however, have not been able to give satisfaction to the farmers throughout the country. From the vicinity of Moose Jaw, Caron, Cardstone, Drinkwater, and a hundred other points, complaints are being daily received on the situation, and Boards of Trade are taking what action they can towards obtaining relief for the farmers and merchants, whose interests are closely threatened.

Edmonton has decided to make a definite proposal to construct a street railway line from Edmonton to Strathcona in return for a franchise to operate the street cars in that city. This is not only a wise move to take away competition, but should establish many advantages which both cities would derive from having the same car service under municipal control. Under the application for the franchise the city agrees to commence the construction of a street car line in Strathcona before the end of 1908, and build a mile of track for each 2,000 people in the city, giving a fifteen minutes' service between both the towns. Should the arrangement be carried out, Edmonton cannot dispose of her street railway unless approved of by both cities. The commissioners' report on the question was adopted, and the proposition will be put in legal shape and presented to Strathcona in the near future.

Mayor Returns from London Town.

Mayor Ashdown returned last week after visiting the financial centres of Great Britain, where he had been to look into conditions in order to advise the council regarding the flotation of the city's debentures. The field did not look particularly bright to His Worship at the present, but he has confidence that with an improvement in the money

situation Winnipeg debentures would command a ready market at a good price. Meantime the city is receiving a large amount of revenue from its taxes, which is considerably more than meeting the expenses. They will require before long to make some arrangement for a temporary loan in addition to that which they already have. The Board of Trade at their last meeting passed a resolution favoring the return of Mayor Ashdown as mayor for the ensuing year, and they have pledged themselves to give him their cordial and active support at the coming election.

It is understood that Mayor Ashdown will advocate delay in submitting money by-laws to the citizens. About a million dollars are required for a bathing station, overhead bridge, playgrounds, public abattoir and conduit system. A very interesting report will be laid by the mayor before the council at their next meeting, the report containing information as to offers received for the city bonds while His Worship was in London. It is said that the bids were round the figure of 90. About a million and a quarter will be required on the 31st December to pay off debenture debt, and for the meantime, until there is a change in the financial situation, delay will be advised. Over \$112,000 have already been spent in the city power scheme, and there is a balance of \$300,000, which the city is due on the contracts already laid.

Western Accommodation.

Several complaints have been heard during the past month from various country points regarding the action of some of the banks in the curtailing of credits to general merchants during the months of September and October, when the money was most needed. The merchants maintain that their fall goods arrive at this time, and in years past they have received whatever accommodation was necessary.

Business on Cash Basis.

A writer to the Board of Trade from Lemberg, Sask., suggested as a remedy for the prevention of the present condition of affairs that they should do a strictly cash business, which would largely revert to the banks carrying the farmers and not the merchants for their year's supply of necessities. The general feeling is that bankers might be a little more considerate to the interests of the West in the granting of credits for legitimate business in view of the fact that the country is sound in every way, and will from its present crop do much more than pay any temporary advance.

Inside property for the past week has been fairly active, considerable warehouse lots changing hands for actual use in the vicinity of the Canadian Pacific Railway. A 75-foot frontage, it is understood, has changed hands for \$40,000. So far there is little doing in outside property, and it is not expected that there will be any return of the speculative element for a long time, but inside property has retained its value in all recent transactions.

The C.P.R. have made enlargements on all their important buildings, and several immense new sheds are being erected, the most imposing of which is the passenger car shop, measuring 240 x 120 in area, and built entirely of concrete. Another mammoth building is the tender and wheel shop, which is in course of construction, and a large addition is being made to the power house. The total expenditure will be in the vicinity of \$300,000 for these building improvements.

Sir Thomas Shaughnessy and party of directors of the Canadian Pacific Railway arrived in Port Arthur recently. With reference to a now famous saying of an ex-president of the Canadian Pacific Railway that grass would grow on the streets of Port Arthur after the removal of the company to Fort William some years ago, Sir Thomas jocularly remarked that the prediction does not seem to have been fulfilled.

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After a residence of ten years or thereabout in London, Mr. H. G. McMicken is revisiting Toronto and Winnipeg, where he formerly resided. His reception in Winnipeg, where he was a pioneer about 1872, was of the warmest, as it will be wherever he goes. Mr. McMicken returns presently to London, England, where he is the representative of the Great Northern Railway.

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Montreal may with propriety take cognizance of the position of Peoria, Illinois, which resembles her own in one respect. Peoria, which has 75,000 people, has only one water main between her reservoir and the city, and it has of late been out of service for several hours at a time. Luckily for her, no fires occurred while the water was turned off. The other day, fire, resulting from faulty electric wiring broke out in the waterworks pumping station at Peoria, and caused serious damage besides imperilling the safety of the city. This should remind the Montreal public of recent revelations concerning the dangerous condition of their pumping house.