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CROPS AND THE WEST

Crop conditions in Saskatchewan are satisfactory to date. The crops have had ample rain, and the cool weather of the early part of the season developed a strong plant. A great deal depends upon the weather conditions from this time on. The crop in Saskatchewan will probably be fully as large as that of last year.

So far as Manitoba is concerned, the recent rains have been satisfactory, but as the crop was further advanced than in Saskatchewan, Manitoba has suffered somewhat on account of the delay in getting rain. The straw will not be very heavy, but on that account the expense of harvesting the grain will be less, and experience in the prairie country has taught that an average crop is more satisfactory than a heavy one. It looks now like a 17 or 18 bushel per acre crop. Doubtless the crop in Manitoba will bring in more money than that of last year, if we have satisfactory weather from now forward. Alberta conditions generally are satisfactory.

The farmers are not buying very much, and the net profits will be more than usual. The present attitude of the banks will ultimately bring sounder conditions, as the farmers in the past have been disposed to borrow too freely. The sale of all kinds of merchandise is being curtailed this season, which is well, as in many lines the sale of goods has been pressed unduly heretofore. This is particularly applicable to farm implements.

While everyone is feeling the scarcity of money, nobody is being hurt particularly. While the banks are not making any new commitments, they are taking care of their regular business accounts. The value of inside property is not being affected in any way, and the situation is holding together fairly well under the circumstances.

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS OF THIS ISSUE

Editorial:	PAGE
Supremacy of Montreal Harbor	137
When Will the Panama be Ready?	138
Ice Cream on the Farm	138
Finance and Economics:	
Investments and the Market	144
Where British Capital Went	145
Eighty Millions Sterling Decline	146
Seventy-four Incorporations	151
Stock Exchanges:	
Prices of the Week	168-9
Canadian Securities in London	170
Bonds and Municipal Credit:	
Canadian Municipal Financing Criticized	58
Money Was For Foundation Purposes	147
Municipal Financing	172
Commerce and Transportation:	
Canada Has Enough Railways	139
Montreal City and Water Company	149
Turpentine is Adulterated	150
Food Supplies of Western Canada	155
Insurance:	
Value of Life Insurance, XX.	143
Sun Life to Reassure	153

If this year's western crop is harvested successfully, the proceeds of it will not affect world-wide conditions, but no doubt it will give considerable relief to the local situation.

SUPREMACY OF MONTREAL HARBOR

Heretofore, the advocates of a deeper channel for the River St. Lawrence have not considered there were difficulties other than a sufficient supply of money or credit to put the necessary dredges at work. A thirty-five feet channel all the way was considered feasible and predictions have been heard that the biggest ships would be able to dock at Montreal.

An investigation is about to begin, not with a view to increasing the safety of the channel by increasing its depth, but with a view to finding how much deeper it can be made with safety. Every additional foot the channel is deepened, diverts additional water into the channel. The question now is how much deeper it will be safe to dig the channel and yet leave the rest of the river available for navigation purposes.

Mr. Victor Forneret, of Ottawa, is one of a commission appointed by the government to carry on the investigation. He has been employed as an engineer on the St. Lawrence and is familiar with the situation. The investigation will begin immediately and Montreal will then know her fate. The point will be settled as to whether it will be possible for Montreal to continue the head of ocean navigation for the largest ships or whether she will have to resign her position in that respect to Quebec or some other port further down the St. Lawrence where the depth and width of the channel are sufficient to provide the largest ships with a safe passage.