

THE BUSINESS SITUATION.

Winnipeg, Saturday, July 31.

In most wholesale lines business is fairly brisk for the season. The hardware trade is brisk. Lumber is very active. There is a brisk trade in green fruits. Paints, oils, etc., are quieter. Railway construction in the west has increased business very materially in some lines, and has led to enhanced prices in some commodities. A notable instance is the sharp advance in oats and the demand at better prices for dairy grades of butter. Farmers are now taking home harvesting machinery. The manufacturing departments of the harness and saddlery trade are very busy. Work in the Canadian Pacific railway shops here is active, partly owing to new work being turned out for railway construction west. Men who are willing to work on railway construction have been in demand, and on this account it is expected it will be necessary to bring in a good many men from the eastern provinces to help in the harvest here. Harvest excursions will be run from Ontario and other eastern points to Manitoba. The prospect for good prices for the next wheat crop is creating a pleasant feeling. A good many new retail businesses have been established throughout the country recently, particularly in Northwestern Ontario mining centres. Bank clearings at Winnipeg this week were \$225,000 greater than for the corresponding week last year and about \$585,000 greater than in the like week two years ago. In real estate city property is very quiet, but there has been rather more doing in farm lands of late. Interest rates remain at 7 to 8 per cent for bank discounts and mortgage loans, for ordinary transactions, 7 per cent being the usual rate on city property and 8 per cent on farm security, for moderate loans.

WINNIPEG MARKETS.

Winnipeg, Saturday Afternoon, July 31

AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY.

Farmers are now beginning to take out harvest machinery. Mowers have been in main request of late. Good sales of binders are reported from agents at country points.

DRUGS.

Business has been quite brisk in this branch, owing particularly to several large orders to supply stocks for new drug stores which have been or are being established at points throughout the country. Bleaching powder is firm. Cream tartar and tartaric acid are firm abroad at the recent advance. We will give a new list of drug prices next week.

FISH.

Stormy weather has interfered with fishing on Lake Winnipeg considerably of late. Shipments of fish are being made in car lots south and east, but prices are low. There is no change

in local prices this week. Jobbing prices are as follows: White 51-2c, pickeral 4c, trout 9, haddock 8c, salmon 12 1-2 to 15c lb., kippered goldeyes 30c doz. Oysters are quoted at 70c for selects in cans.

GROCERIES.

Some new season goods have come to hand, consisting of domestic canned peas and strawberries. Further orders for canned goods have been placed by Winnipeg jobbers. Nothing has been done in new teas here yet. It is said that the Japanese are sending commissioners to study the tea question in America, owing to the displacement of their teas by India and Ceylon varieties. One result of this, it is said may be the stopping of picking the third crop. This third picking supplies the cheaper qualities, and no doubt depreciates the quality of Japanese teas. Samples of new China teas, prepared after the style of India teas, are being shown here.

GREEN FRUITS.

The market has been cleared up of the soft stock, which was delayed in transit, as noted last week. California plums and peaches are firm, and they are not arriving very freely yet, as present shipments are running largely to pears. This will likely continue for a week or so. Bananas are in good supply, of fine quality and at a little lower prices. Melons are abundant at easier prices now, though supplies came to hand too late to fill orders for the South Western branch line trains on Thursday. New apples are not arriving in fit condition yet to re-ship, except to nearby points. A few southern Concord grapes have been received and sold at 75c for small baskets. California oranges continue to run to large sizes, which is a feature of the late Valencias, which are the only orange fit to ship at this season. Lemons are firm. California lemons now offering are very fine quality. The run 300 to 360 size mostly. Tomatoes are easier. The first blueberries of the season came to hand this week, and sold at 13c per lb. which is a big price. It is said that the blueberry crop is short in Minnesota, and if this is the case, surplus local stock may find a profitable market in the States south. Last year some blueberries were shipped from here to points south in the States. The demand will depend on the packing. If shippers of blueberries will use care in packing, and use uniform size boxes or baskets, it will help materially to find a market and maintain the price. Pineapples are out of the market at present. Prices are as follows: California late Valencia oranges 5c to \$6.50 box; Messina lemons 23 to \$6.50; bananas, \$1.75 to \$2.50 per bunch; California lemons, 5c to \$6.50 a box, pie plants, 11-2 cents per pound; tomatoes, \$1.50 to \$1.75 per crate of 4 baskets; California plums, \$1.75 per box; California peaches, \$1.75. California Bartlett pears, \$3.50 to \$3.75 per box; onions \$4 per 100 lbs; watermelons, \$5 to \$5.50 per doz.

HARDWARE.

The only change in prices in the local market this week is a drop in the price of bar iron to \$2.10. Business keeps brisk in this branch, and the volume is swelled very materially by orders for railway construction work in the west. See quotations on another page.

LEATHER AND HARNESS.

There is a decidedly strong feeling in the leather market, and all ad-

VICES point to a further advance in leather, owing to the price of hides being high. There has been a big demand here for harness goods and manufacturers are very busy. Supplies for the Crow's Nest construction work has added considerably to recent orders, and many orders were placed to exhibition visitors.

LUMBER.

Brisk business is the continued report from the mills. There is no lack of orders these days, and the mills have a rich business as they can handle in some cases.

PAINTS, OILS, ETC.

Prices are steady and without change this week. The recent decline in the price of turpentine in first hands has not effected the price here. The fact is turpentine has been selling in Winnipeg for some time at less price than it could be laid down for here. Even with the recent reduction in first hands, the local price does not permit of any margin to make any further cut upon. See quotations in another column.

GRAIN AND PRODUCE.

WHEAT.—Though prices were easier on some days, as will be seen by our daily market reports of Chicago and other markets, the general feeling this week in leading wheat markets has been strong. Bullish influences predominate everywhere at present, and the general feeling in the trade at the moment seems to be that the next wheat crop is going to bring good prices, compared with the basis of prices in most recent years. Trade papers and brokers' reports generally take the bull idea and predict a strong market for the next crop. It is now quite evident that the American spring wheat crop has been over-estimated. The big northwestern spring wheat states are not going to have the bumper crop that was predicted earlier in the season, and the same thing is true of the Manitoba crop. The spring seeding time was so favorable that it was at once concluded that a big crop was assured. But frosty weather and delayed rains put the crop back. Estimates of the crop in the Northwestern States are continually being reduced, and the best estimates now do not talk of more than an average crop. In Manitoba a fair average crop is expected, the crop being irregular, and while some is very fine other districts are rather poor, and there is considerable late grain. Europe is having rather a light crop this year so far as can be learned from the reports, which is one of the strong features. Another strong feature is the low record of stocks, the visible supply in the U.S. and Canada, east of the Rocky Mountains being down to about 16,000,000 bushels, which is a very low amount. A year ago the visible was 47,000,000 bushels, two years ago it was over 39,000,000 bushels and three years ago over 57,000,000 bushels. Yesterday at Chicago September wheat touched 75 3-4c, which showed a big spurt, though the close was 1 1-4c under the top. The local market has followed outside markets, No. 1 hard wheat selling up to 81c afloat at Fort William yesterday, which is the highest point reached yet. About 80 1-2c was the idea at the close yesterday for No. 1 hard, afloat Fort William.

FLOUR.—The market has been very strong in sympathy with wheat. Liberal sales of Manitoba flour are re-