

THE BUSINESS SITUATION

Winnipeg, Saturday, March 12

Spring shipments in textile lines have been largely sent out, and it is out of season for sorting trade. The implement trade was very busy filling orders for spring stocks, country dealers being anxious to get in stocks on account of the fine weather which early in the week indicated an early spring. The heaviest snow storm of the winter, however set in on Wednesday, covering a large area of country, and this rather changed ideas as to very early spring. This will be an advantage, as it will give more time to handle spring supplies, and very early springs are not regarded as favorable for the crops, as crops which get started very early are more liable to damage from late frosts. The export cattle trade is becoming active again, but so far attention has been directed mainly to the export of stocker cattle to the United States. Labor is well employed. Men are wanted for the Crow's Nest as well as for the Stikine railway construction. Railway passenger traffic is the heaviest on record, but it does not directly affect the trade of the city to any extent, as the traffic is largely through passengers for the Klondike, and the amount of outfitting done here is not large. The annual spring immigration movement has now set in, thus adding to the heavy railway traffic. Indirectly the city trade is benefited by the larger number of men employed in railway work here, the railway shops being busy for the season.

WINNIPEG MARKETS

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FUEL.

There is abundance of wood fuel offering, with prices about the same. Coal is unchanged.

FISH.

Prices are about the same and there is very little change in the variety of fish offering. Shell oysters are out of the market. Haddies are offering freely at low prices. The quantity of Manitoba lake fish offered here this winter has been much less than usual, and the season for winter fishing is about over.

GREEN FRUITS.

Good cranberries are very scarce. Any good unfrozen stock is sold at much higher prices. Navel oranges are 25c lower per box. Malaga grapes have a wide range as to quality, as some are going off quality. Other lines are unchanged. Prices are as follows: Mexican oranges, \$3.00 to \$3.50; navel oranges, \$3.75 to \$4.00 California seedling oranges, \$3.25; bitter oranges, \$6 per case; bananas, per bunch, \$2.50 to \$3.50; California lemons, \$3.75 to \$4.00 per box; apples, Ontario stock, \$4 to \$4.50 per barrel for good to

choice; southern apples \$4 per bbl.; off quality, \$2.00 to \$3.50 per bbl. as to condition, cranberries, unfrozen, \$8.50 to \$9 a barrel, frozen stock, \$4 to \$7 per barrel, as to quality, which varies widely; sweet potatoes, \$5.00 per barrel; Malaga grapes \$7 to \$10 per keg; Ontario black walnuts, 8c lb.; coconuts, \$1 per doz.; Sicily filberts, large, 11 to 12c per lb.; Grenoble walnuts, 14c; figs, fancy ones, \$1.25 to \$1.50 per 10 lb. box. 30 lb. boxes, 18c; 50 lb. boxes, 17c per lb.; dates, 7 to 7 1/2c per lb.; shelled walnuts, 25 to 27c per lb.; imported celery, 60 to 75c per doz.; honey, 7 1/2 to 10c.

GROCERIES.

The market is firm for most staple goods, particularly canned goods, which are selling here at less than fresh supplies could be laid down for. Tomatoes continue very firm. Oatmeal is costing higher to lay down. Rice is firm and importations would cost above parity with present prices here. Lard is 1-4c to 1-2c higher, and breakfast bacon has advanced 1-2c. Mess pork is 50c per barrel higher.

IMPLEMENTS.

The change from springlike weather to more wintry weather, following the heavy snow storm of Wednesday, was rather welcomed by the implement houses, as the farmers and country dealers were beginning to crowd for their spring supplies. The change in the weather will give dealers more time to handle the spring trade. Besides this a very early spring is not regarded as favorable for crops, as cold weather may set in later and weaken crops sown early. Business has been good in spring requirements. Binder twine is very strong and prices tend upward.

LEATHER.

The market holds very firm. Upper leather cannot be secured at the prices lately quoted here. This market has not responded to the last advances east, but the feeling is very firm, business is good—in fact is very active in the harness and leather trade, and dealers are pushed to fill orders.

LUMBER.

Dealers report business opening out nicely, and already there is quite a demand from the country. The heavy snow storm this week will be received with favor, as ensuring more water to float logs in the spring. Stocks of lumber are smaller than for many years, and it would be a great inconvenience to have logs hung up this year for lack of water.

GRAIN AND PRODUCE.

WHEAT—Wheat has averaged lower. Prices took a drop on Monday of about 1-2c, recovered on Tuesday, held steady on Wednesday, but declined nearly 1c on Thursday and another 1c on Friday, in United States markets.

Locally the market has been quiet, No. 1 hard has ranged from 97 to 98 1/2-2c, alfalfa basis Fort William. Yesterday 97c was quoted for cash and about \$1 for May delivery. Some wheat is going east all rail. Yesterday \$1.09 was quoted, North Bay, for No. 1 hard shipped east all rail. Receipts at Fort William last week were 27,000 bushels and shipments 23,500 bushels, leaving in store 727,000 bushels. A year ago Fort William stocks were 2,834,000 bushels, two years ago 3,693,000 bushels, three

years ago 910,836 bushels, four years ago 2,115,000 bushels. Stocks of wheat at lake and interior points a year ago were estimated at 7,000,000 bushels, compared with about 4,400,000 bushels at present. This includes lake ports, milling points and country elevators, country elevator stocks being estimated at about 3,000,000 bushels.

FLOUR—The market is steadier and unchanged. Renewed shipments of flour to Australia indicate that the Australians have learned by experience of the good qualities of Manitoba flour for toning up and giving strength to soft wheat flour, and though Australia is not obliged to import wheat this year, they will no doubt continue to take limited quantity of the Manitoba article. We quote Patent, \$2.50; best bakers \$2.30; second bakers \$1.90; XXX, \$1.40 per sack of 48 lb., with discount of 5c net.

MILLEED—Prices are unchanged. There is a good demand for bran and prices are firm. We quote bran at \$11 and shorts \$13 per ton in bulk. Large lots \$1 per ton less.

OATMEAL—Prices are firm. The last Ontario meal brought in here cost \$1.70 laid down for bags of rolled meal, but eastern millers now ask \$2. United States meal was laid down here as low as \$1.60 some time ago, but this week equal to \$1.70 here was refused, and round lots, freight and duty paid, would cost \$1.75 to \$1.80. Rolled meal is generally held at \$2 in small lots.

GROUND FEED — Pure grain feed is quoted at \$22 to \$24 for rolled oat feed. Inferior mixed mill feed, \$18 to \$20 per ton. Ground corn feed is quoted at \$16 to \$17 per ton, Oil cake \$22 per ton.

OATS—The market is very strong and prices have advanced sharply. This is probably owing to the demand for seed. A large quantity of oats will be required for seed, as many farmers are without any, and choice oats are very scarce. Up to 35c per bushel of 34 pounds is asked at country points for choice oats, and only at a few points are there any to be had. This would be equal to about 41c cost including freight, on track Winnipeg. Feed oats are held at 39 to 40c and seed at 41 to 43c.

BARLEY—There is some demand for seed barley, but there is scarcely any obtainable. What has been offered is not fit for seed and very high prices have been asked, ranging from 43 to 50c per bushel. About 45c is the outside idea for a good seed barley, though more may have to be paid. Feed barley nominal about 40c.

CORN—We quote 40c per bus. of 56 lbs., for cars on track here. Market firm owing to advance south.

BUTTER, creamery—A little fall creamery is still held, which is selling at 23 to 23 1/2c.

BUTTER—Dairy—Market is steady. There is very little held and receipts are light. We quote dealers paying 14 to 16c net for good to choice dairy tubs, and selling at 16 to 18c on a commission basis, less freight and commission. Good rolls will bring about as much as dairy.

CHEESE—Dealers are selling at 10 to 10 1/2c. Stocks limited.

EGGS — Eggs are easier. Dealers have paid 16c for receipts of fresh country eggs. We quote 16 to 18c for fresh as to quality, in small lots. Lined 12 1/2c.

DRESSED POULTRY—Poultry is getting scarce. Very little frozen