

To Shippers of Hides.

The following item, dated from a western territorial point, lately appeared in the columns of a city paper:

"Shippers of hides here complain bitterly of Winnipeg inspection, both as to quality and weight. The low classification and docking on weights, reduce the values 25 to 35 per cent., and makes the hide business a very profitable monopoly in favor of Winnipeg dealers."

The sender of the paragraph shows an entire lack of information on the subject at issue. So far as the grading of the hides is concerned, it is impossible for dealers to make anything by the inspection. The inspection is done by a Government official, who is responsible to shippers as well as purchasers of hides for any mistakes he may make. Dealers have nothing to do with the inspection, but merely take the hides as they are graded by the inspector. If a hide is graded No. 2 (or any other number for that matter) by the inspector, the dealer takes it as a No. 2, and he is bound to sell it as a No. 2, for the hide bears the inspector's stamp, which dare not be removed and could not be removed without cutting the hide, which of course could be detected. If a No. 1 hide was graded No. 2, it could in no possible way be an advantage to the dealer, for it would only sell as a No. 2. The inspector is moreover sworn to do his duty between the producer and tanner, which means that he must grade hides as he finds them. An inspector may occasionally make a mistake, but the dealer cannot in any way benefit by such error. A hide to grade No. 1 must be perfect, and if Winnipeg hides are not kept up to the standard in grading, the market for them would soon be ruined. The inspector here is a man who thoroughly understands his business, having had a lifetime experience. As to prices paid here Winnipeg has been proportionately higher than eastern markets, for whilst freight charges to the east were \$1.19 per 100 pounds, the price of hides was only 1c under eastern markets, thus making the markets here 19c higher on each 100 pounds than eastern prices. Prices here are also only 3c under Minneapolis for No. 1 hides, where tanneries are right at hand. Besides Minneapolis prices are 2c lower for No. 2 than No. 1, whereas here only one cent difference is made between No. 1 and No. 2. This makes a very great difference when it is stated that this season nine out of ten hides have graded lower than No. 1, and this often due to carelessness in dressing, cutting hides, etc. The hides received this season have been unusually bad. Shippers are very careless about leaving horns, legs, etc., attached to hides, which only make a loss to themselves in extra freight charges, as these appendages are removed by the inspector. All hides should be free from salt, dirt, meat, horns, tail bones and sinews; and before being weighed all such substances are removed, or a proper deduction made from the weight. All bull, stag, tainted, grubby, badly scarred, cut, scored hides, both green and dry, are classed as damaged. In dry hides, moth-eaten, sunburnt or weather beaten, are classed as damaged. All kip and calf, both green and dry, should be trimmed the same as hides, with the exception that the tail bone may be left in calfskins.

Handlers of hides should also remember that during warm weather it is necessary to have green hides salted promptly, or they will spoil, but hides can be shipped green in the winter season in a frozen state without salting. To cure a hide properly it is first necessary to trim it by cutting off what does not belong to the hide, such as horns, tails, bones and sinews, then spread the hide on the floor and sprinkle salt evenly and freely over the flesh side. In this way pile one hide on the other, flesh side up, head on head, tail on tail. Stretch out the flanks and the legs so as to give the hides a chance to drain. It will take a week or more to cure hides thoroughly. When hides have lain over a week in salt, they will then do to tie up and ship, after having shaken of the surplus salt. For a large heavy hide it will take about a pail of salt, and a less quantity for a smaller hide or calf skin in proportion to size. Green butcher hides shrink in salting from 10 to 15 per cent., consequently salted or cured are worth from 1 to 2c more than green.

Seeding in the Northwest.

Except in a very few localities where there is a great deal of lowland, the ground was in splendid condition and the bright sunny weather will cause a speedy growth. The returns will undoubtedly show a large increase in acreage, especially in Dakota and some sections in Minnesota. Some few reports speak of an increased acreage of barley and considerably less of flax. The late rains, while they interrupted seeding operations for a few days, are of great benefit to the land and the grain already in the ground. The cool weather lasted just long enough to give the seed time to swell and germinate slowly, an important factor in a large field. The slower the growth at the start the better able is the grain to withstand a hot, dry period later on. Old settlers claim that in this section a heavy fall of snow in winter followed by a backward spring are almost invariably the forerunners of a good wheat crop. And as these conditions exist in the Northwest the present season, the predictions for a bountiful crop are plentiful. While these forecasts are slightly premature, it is certain however, than not for many years have the "signs" been so favorable at seeding time.—*Duluth Daily Trade.*

The Breadstuffs Situation.

The California wheat crop of 1887 is an unknown quantity. There was in the first half of April about 1½ inches of rain in the California wheat belt, which helped the summer fall-sown wheat; but it was too late and not enough for the winter-sown. The rain-fall at San Francisco from July 1, 1886, to April 20, 1887, has been 18.86 inches, against 32.67 inches the corresponding period in 1885-86. The estimated output of the California 1887 crop on April 25 is 1,500,000 short tons, equal to 50,000,000 bushels. In 1886 California reported a probable crop that year of 70,000,000 bushels but the actual output was, as per the Washington report, only 36,165,000 bushels from 3,104,690 acres. The area under wheat in that State for 1887 is less than for 1886, and the rain-fall to April 20 has been 13.81 inches less than for the corresponding period in 1885-86.

Signal service reports from the Rocky mountains to the Atlantic, since the storm of two weeks ago, note generally light rainfalls, with few exceptions; comparatively few stations reported rain, the number ranging from six to fifteen daily in all the wheat belt, winter and spring, north of the Ohio rivers. Iowa, central Illinois and some other States have suffered from drought. Damage has been done in New Jersey, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maryland and Michigan from water-kill. New Jersey may not raise more than one-half as much wheat as last year. It is probable that the Government report of May 10, prox., on the condition of the winter wheat crop (which was 88 on April 10) will show a decline of 10 points, or perhaps more. Spring wheat seeding has made good progress, and, under generally favorable conditions, with the area somewhat increased. That of winter is somewhat diminished. The winter wheat harvest in the United States and in Europe will probably be later than usual, requiring additional supplies of old wheat to meet consumptive wants. The spring wheat crop of the United States does not move in much volume in the latter half of September and in the first half of October, farmers usually reaping, threshing and marketing their barley crop before commencing on the spring wheat crop.—*Bradstreet's*

SOURIS CITY wants a blacksmith.

H. ADAMS will open a hotel at Portage la Prairie.

JOS. BUCHANAN, shoemaker, Rapid City, has gone to Dakota.

THE Bell Telephone Co will establish a system at Calgary.

THE Calgary Tribune urges the testing of fall wheat in that district.

G. BALKWELL offers his stone grist mill at Rapid City for sale, with water power.

R. L. ALEXANDER, late of Broadview, will open a livery business at Banff, Alberta.

ARMSTRONG & Co., general storekeepers, Portage la Prairie, have assigned in trust to D. S. McDonald.

C. A. LOUDON, of the Queen's Hotel Broadview, Assa, has disposed of his chattels by auction. The Queens will be closed.

W. H. FORD, Calgary, has been appointed agent for Alberta for Westbrook & Fairchild, wholesale implements, etc., of Winnipeg.

A MEETING has been held at Portage la Prairie to consider the proposed legislation regarding embarrassed municipalities. Another meeting will be held.

SAULTS & KIRKLAND, publishers of the Winnipeg *Siftings*, have dissolved partnership. The paper will now be published by the Winnipeg Publishing Co, under the management of F. W. Kirkland.

MR. LESLIE, of Scott & Leslie, furniture dealers, Winnipeg, has returned from a business trip east, where he has purchased heavily with a special view to developing the wholesale trade of the firm.

LANDSOWNE College is the name of an educational institution lately established at Portage la Prairie, by Dr. Franklin. The old Hudson's Bay Co's. hotel will be used for the college. It will be non-denominational.

WM. SHULTS, T. Richardson, J. G. Crombie, Alexander Calder and Thomas A. Gamble, contractor, of Winnipeg, apply for incorporation under the name of the Manitoba Construction Co, for the purpose of undertaking contracts of various kinds. The capital stock is \$100,000.