

THE BUSINESS SITUATION

Winnipeg, Saturday, Feb. 12.

The event of the week has been the annual bazaar, inaugurated a number of years ago, and held in February of each year. The month of February has now come to be considered almost a general holiday season in the country, or at least a convenient time for country people to visit the city. Special cut railway rates are given during the bazaar season, which are taken advantage of by country people to visit the city. In addition to the winter sporting events, February is the month of conventions, and a very large number of conventions and annual meetings of various societies are now held in the city during February of each year. Unlike the summer exhibition, when women and young people come to the city in large numbers, the February visitors are nearly all men, and largely business men. City jobbers have been busy all the week attending to the wants of the visitors, and a very considerable amount of purchasing has been done—decidedly more than was done in past years on similar occasions. The weather has been very mild and business is opening up favorably for the season. Passenger traffic on the railways is very heavy for this season of the year, the number of through passengers being large, due to the Klondike excitement largely. Bank clearings at Winnipeg this week were almost one-third larger than for the corresponding week last year, and considerably over one-third larger than for the like week two years ago.

WINNIPEG MARKETS

Winnipeg, Saturday Afternoon, Feb. 12

AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS.

The branch is beginning to open up. Seed drills are the main article in demand.

BICYCLES.

The evidence of the coming season's trade in bicycles are becoming manifest. Consumers are not buying yet, but dealers are beginning to show new season goods quite freely.

FUEL.

There is no change in coal here. The recent advance of 10c on Pennsylvania anthracite coal at headquarters in the United States does not affect western markets at present. The mild weather has greatly reduced the volume of business. In wood fuel the feature is the large quantity of jack pine offering. There is more of this class of wood than of all other varieties, and in fact more than is wanted, consequently the tendency of prices is easier. There is not too much tamarac, however. The latter variety of wood has been well cut in the more convenient districts and has to be brought longer distances than formerly.

GROCERIES.

This has been quite a busy week with the jobbers, in looking after the wants of customers who were in the

city from outside points. The trade sale of a wholesale stock of groceries was a feature of the week. Some lines sold above market values at the sale, while other lines were much below current values. Advances from California are very firm on dried fruits all along the line. Imported cured meats and lard are costing higher. Oatmeal costs 5c higher to lay down here, but jobbers' prices are the same. Canned tomatoes are still obtainable at \$2.75, though they would cost \$3.10 to lay down here.

GREEN FRUITS.

Business is moving a little brisker, and heated bars are being sent out along the railways to distribute goods to the country trade. Oranges and lemons are improving in value as the season advances. Choice sound apples bring full prices, but there is a lot of off quality or spotted stuff which sell at low prices, as low as \$2.50 per barrel being quoted for spotted goods. California celery, very large bunches, is offering. Prices here are unchanged, as follows: Mexican oranges, \$4 to \$4.50; navel oranges, \$4.50; bananas per bunch, \$3 to \$3.50; California lemons, \$4.50 to \$5 per box; apples, Ontario stock, \$4 to \$4.50 per barrel for good to choice, southern apples, \$4 per bbl.; Cape Cod cranberries, \$7.50 to \$8 per barrel; sweet potatoes, \$5 per barrel; Malaga grapes, \$7.50 per keg for medium, and \$8 for heavy weights; Ontario black walnuts, 8c lb; coconuts, \$1 per doz; Sicily filberts, large, 11c to 12c per lb; Grenoble walnuts, 13c; figs, fancy elements, \$1.40 to \$1.50 per 10 lb. box, 30 lb boxes, 16c; 50 lb. boxes, 17c per lb.; dates 7-1-2 per pound; imported celery, 75c per doz.

HARDWARE, PAINTS, ETC.

Local houses have been busy with country customers this week, who have been in the city in large numbers, and considerable buying has been done. Business is opening up well for the season. Prices are steady. The recent advances in refined petroleum oil has not affected this market.

LEATHER.

Prices hold firm at the advance reported last week.

RAW FURS.

Offerings have been moderate so far this season. There is the usual keen competition and good prices are realized for lots offered in this market. The advance in prices at the recent London sales was fully anticipated here some time ago. In fact furs have been bought for some time on a basis of expected higher prices, and the advance was not up to expectations, taken all around. See quotations on another page.

GRAIN AND PRODUCE.

WHEAT—Wheat has held rather firmer this week. Yesterday outside markets were strong, advancing 1-2 to 1c, and cash wheat again touched the \$1 mark at Chicago. The visible supply statement shows a weekly decrease. Bradstreet's report shows stocks in the United States and Canada about 30,000,000 bushels less than a year ago. Exports from Atlantic ports last week were smaller being 3,430,000 bushels. Cables from India yesterday said that sufficient rain had fallen in northern and central India to ensure good crops.

Locally the markets have been quiet. Manitoba farmers have been selling very little wheat, but deliveries will

no doubt soon increase, as the farmers will want to sell any surplus still held before the roads break up. Prices for No. 1 hard have ranged from 93c on Monday, up to 95c yesterday, afloat basis, Fort William. Some all rail business is doing with Ontario buyers, on a basis of about \$1.07, North Bay.

FLOUR—The market is steadier, more regular at 5c higher per sack. We quote: Patent, \$2.45; best bakers, \$2.25; second bakers, \$1.85; XXX, \$1.40 per sack of 98 lbs.

MILLFEED—Prices are more uniform and higher, both bran and shorts being quoted \$1 per ton higher and all the mills are quoting about the same prices. We quote bran at \$11 and shorts \$13 per ton in bulk. Large lots \$1 per ton less.

OATMEAL—There has been another advance of 5c on imported meal a sack, making an advance of 10c within a short time. Imported rolled meal is now selling in large lots to jobbers at 1.70 per sack. Some very inferior meal is offering, including meal mixed with ground wheat.

GROUND FEED—Pure grain feed is quoted at \$22 to \$24 for oats and barley, the outside price 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—There is very little doing. Buyers are holding off and bidding lower, and try to get car lots at 34 to 35c as to quality. Holders however, do not like to let go, as their stocks have cost them too high to sell at these prices, and they ask 36c usually for a good oat. The advance in eastern and southern markets does not affect the situation here, as the market is purely local in its character.

BARLEY—Feed barley is quoted at about 35 to 36. Malting samples, 38 to 43c as to quality, and 1 to 2c higher for fancy samples.

CORN—Car lots cost higher to lay down here owing to the advance south. We quote 38 1-2 to 39c per bushel of 56 lbs., for cars on track here.

Butter—There is no local trade doing in creamery and no stocks held here.

BUTTER—Dairy—Quote selling price at 16 to 18c for fresh tub and rolls, the outside price for selected packages in small quantities. Ten per cent commission off these prices to country shippers. The tendency is easier particularly for rolls, which are sometimes held 1c under tubs.

CHEESE—Dealers are selling at 10 1-2 to 11c in small lots.

DRESSED POULTRY—Chickens will bring 7 1-2 to 8 1-2c. From 10 to 11c would be paid for Manitoba turkeys. Geese are scarce and wanted and 9 to 10c would be paid for them. Ducks would bring about 8c. Eastern turkeys sell at 13 to 14c.

DRESSED MEATS—A large quantity of frozen beef is held, which is very slow sale. This is owing to the decreased demand this year for shipment to the lumber camps of Ontario, and also to larger stocks having been laid in during the early part of the winter. The firm tone for dressed hogs continues 6 1-4 to 6 1-2c being paid for choice lots of desirable weights. Heavy hogs are 5 1-2 to 6c as to quality. Frozen beef is dull and quoted at 4 to 5c as to quality, and fresh unfrozen at 5 1-2 to 6 1-2c as to quality, for sides. Mutton 5 to 7c, as to quality.