

THE BUSINESS SITUATION

Winnipeg, Saturday, May 21.

Business continues very good in the jobbing trade. The grain trade has been very dull this week. The rush of wheat which came out after seedling was finished, appears to have exhausted supplies held by farmers, and there is now practically nothing doing in country markets. No doubt the farmers rushed out what wheat they held as fast as they could get it to market, to secure the handsome prices paid. Coarse grains and feed-stuffs continue very scarce and high. The lack of rain to start the grass is reducing the butter supply, which is very small for the season. The lumber and building trade is good. Lumber prices are firm and higher, owing to low water and difficulty of floating logs down to the mills. Building operations in the line of business blocks and large buildings are more active in Winnipeg than they have been for many years. Railway construction work has been commenced on the Southeastern, near Winnipeg, and the extension of the Dauphin railway will be commenced next week. Rain is needed for the crops. There have been some showers in certain districts, but a general and prolonged rain is needed. While perhaps no permanent injury has yet been done to the crops, any material lengthening of the period of drought would prove very harmful. Bank clearings at Winnipeg are not far from double what they were for the corresponding period of last year, and considerably more than double the like week of 1896. Clearings for the week ending May 19, 1898, were \$2,123,809; corresponding week of 1897, \$1,214,095, and for 1896, \$95,193.

WINNIPEG MARKETS

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WINDER TWINE.

The market keeps very strong. The supply of raw manilla is now entirely shut off by the blockade of the Philippines. Raw sisal has advanced rapidly on account of the short supply of manilla. There has not been much business done lately. Orders were placed freely early in the season, and those who did not buy in advance are holding off. There is always more or less talk this time of year about an expected shortage but whether or not there will be a scarcity of twine will depend on the crop. If the crop should turn out very heavy there would probably be a squeeze for twine before the harvest was over, but with an average crop there probably will be enough twine to meet requirements.

DRUGS.

The local market is steady. Advices from other drug markets report an advance 50c per lb. on opium and it is said the crop is short. Morphine is higher in sympathy.

FISH.

Stocks of frozen fish are very light and have been cleared out closer than usual at this season. It is said that the fish in cold storage at the Lake Winnipeg freezers have been cleared out, and very little frozen stock is held in the city. Fresh caught white fish from Lake Manitoba are coming in more freely. The fresh caught are selling 1-2c higher than frozen stock were selling at.

GREEN FRUITS.

Business is steadily increasing in this branch as the variety of fruits in the market is enlarged. Bananas are selling freely and are arriving in car lots, the quality being good. Messina lemons, per direct steamers to Montreal, are now in the market. California navel oranges are still in the market, but a week or so will about wind them up. Some fairly good apples are obtainable. New Egyptian onions are selling well. Strawberries and tomatoes are selling 50c lower. Prices are: Navel oranges, \$3.75 to \$4; California seedling oranges, \$2.75 to \$3; bananas, per bunch, \$2 to \$2.75, as to size; Messina lemons, \$3.75 to \$4.25 per box, as to quality; apples, \$4 to \$5.50 per barrel for best sorts, as to quality; off quality, \$2 to \$3.50 per barrel, as to condition. pineapples, \$4 per dozen; pie plant, 2 1-2c to 3c per lb; strawberries, \$5 per case of 24 quarts; tomatoes, \$4 per crate of six baskets; coconuts, \$1 per dozen; Sicily filberts, large 11c to 12c per lb; Grenoble walnuts, 14c, figs, elemes, 10 lb boxes, \$1.25 to \$1.40, as to quality; 50 lb boxes, 17c per lb; dates, 6 1-2 to 7c per lb; Tarragona almonds, 12 1-2 to 13c, peanuts, green, 9c, peanuts, roasted, 12c; pecans, 14 to 15c; strained honey, 7 1-2 to 10c per lb; maple sugar 11 to 12c; syrup per dozen 1-2 gallon tins, \$7; apple cider, 35c per gallon in barrels and half barrels; Egyptian onions, 4 to 4 1-2c per lb.

GROCERIES.

The general feature of the market is one of firmness. There are a number of commodities which ought to be higher here on the basis of the cost of laying down new stock, but owing to competition it is difficult to secure reasonable advances. Oatmeal, beans, split peas, canned meats, hog products, rice, molasses, etc., are all much higher and would cost more to lay down here. In fact jobbers are selling some of these lines at lower prices than they could be laid down for now. New samples of Japan tea have been received. The sales of dried fruit have been very heavy this season, particularly prunes and apricots, and there has been a corresponding decrease in the consumption of canned goods. This is no doubt owing to the reasonable price of the dried fruits named.

HARDWARE, PAINTS, ETC.

The market is very firm on most staple lines. The greatest strength shown in any line is probably in rope. There have been several advances recently on rope, the latest advance of 1-4c taking place yesterday afternoon, to 9 1-4c for sisal and 10 3-4c for Manilla. The market is very strong and further advances are looked for. Lead and all lead products continue very strong. Shot has been advanced 1-4c to 6 1-4c for Canadian soft and 6 3-4c for chilled. In paints a striking feature of this season's trade is the large increase in the demand for ready mixed paints. Where

this were formerly taken now pails or buckets are ordered, and where pails were formerly ordered now barrels are taken. The volume of business continues good.

LUMBER.

The important feature in this branch is another advance of \$1 on almost everything. The white pine manufacturers announced an advance to this extent early in the week, which covers timber and dimension, boards, shiplap, flooring, siding, ceiling, in fact everything but finishing has been advanced \$1 per thousand. On Thursday the representatives of the Pacific coast mills announced an advance of \$1 on the following lines: No. 3 fir flooring, 1x4 and 6, No. 3 fir flooring, 1x3; No. 2 fir siding, 1x6; No. 3 fir siding, 1x6; No. 2 fir ceiling, 1x3, 4 or 6; No. 3 fir ceiling, 1x3, 4 or 6. It is understood the Winnipeg list prices will be advanced at once to correspond with the advances by manufacturers. The situation in lumber is very strong, owing to the very low water. The water in the Lake of the Woods and tributaries is exceptionally low for the season and it looks as though many logs would be hung up this year. Navigation is stopped on some streams.

GRAIN AND PRODUCE.

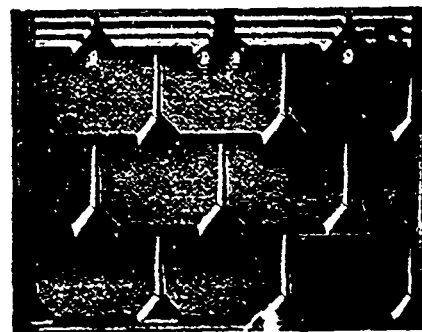
WHEAT—The wheat market has been quieter this week and prices much steadier. The markets have shown wonderful strength considering the excitement and the way prices jumped about during the two previous weeks. While fluctuations have been wide as compared with ordinary conditions, the markets have held remarkably steady and firm considering the recent excited situation.

The local market has been very quiet and very little business has been transacted, while prices have held comparatively steady. The idea of values in this market has held at

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