

THE BUSINESS SITUATION

Winnipeg, Saturday, March 19.

Business is satisfactory in most branches, as will be seen by the statements in detail following, under the various headings. There have been no further commercial failures of any importance. The enormous passenger railway traffic is one of the principal features, due to the opening of the annual spring immigration movement combined with the travel to the Klondike, as well as the extra travel induced on account of the cut railway rates. The passenger traffic now being handled by the railways here, exceeds all previous records. Freight traffic is also heavy for the season. Bank clearings at Winnipeg continue to show a respectable increase over previous years.

WINNIPEG MARKETS

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BOOTS, SHOES AND LEATHER.

Sorting trade is not very brisk yet, though something is doing. There has been considerable demand for rubbers, owing to the prevalence of slushy weather. Rubber footwear is very firm on account of the high price of crude rubber. There has been no advance yet in prices, though other classes of rubber goods have been advanced. Leather is firm. It is said that tan-colored leathers will not be used as freely this season as last.

BINDER TWINE.

This line keeps very firm, on account of the advancing price of the raw material, both for manilla and sisal, particularly for the latter. To show how strong the market is, it may be stated that as late as February 1, sisal was quoted at 3 3-4 at New York, and a month later, on the 1st of March, the quotation was 4 1-4 to 4 3-8. Stocks were light and importations less than usual to that date. Local prices are now 1-2 to 3-1c higher than last year and very firm. In car lots sisal twine is held at 6 1-2c, manilla at 7 1-2c and pure manilla at 3c.

DRY GOODS.

Clothing dealers are now preparing for the fall and winter trade, though the sorting season has not opened yet in spring goods. Considerable business has been done in furnishings. Cut price sales of dry goods have somewhat demoralized the city retail trade.

FISH.

Prices are the same. Oysters continue to sell at a wide range of prices, according to quality. They have been sold at a close price this season, choice selects costing more to lay down here than some have been sold at.

GREEN FRUITS.

There is scarcely any change this week. New dates are offering more freely. Good apples are scarce. Spotted and damaged stuff are selling at buyers' prices. 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 \$1 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.; cocoanuts, \$1 per doz.; Sicily filberts, large 11 to 12c per lb.; Grenoble walnuts, 14c; figs, fancy elemes, \$1.25 to \$1.50 per 10 lb. box. 50 lb. boxes, 16c; 50 lb. boxes, 17c per lb.; dates, 7c per lb.; shelled walnuts, 25 to 27c per lb.; imported celery, 60 to 75c per doz.; honey, 7 1-2 to 10c.

GROCERIES.

The general tendency is one of firmness, particularly for cured meats, lard, canned goods, oatmeal, etc. Business is fairly active. See quotations on another page.

HARDWARE AND PAINTS.

Business is good. There continues to be a large movement in barbed wire and some other lines, and an active trade in building hardware is expected this season. Turpentine is quoted higher, in sympathy with the sharp advance in other markets. Builders' paper is selling at lower prices this season than ever before here.

LUMBER.

A good business is doing for the season and the outlook is good, as there will certainly be more building doing than usual this season, both in the city and country. This combined with lighter stocks of lumber than have been held at this season for many years, means that the season will be a busy one at the mills. The situation in the city lumber trade is still somewhat unsettled, though the prospects point to a more amicable understanding than has prevailed for some time. Another advance was made recently in British Columbia lumber by the coast mills, making the second advance this season for the spring trade, though the last advance is not as great as the first one. The advance is 50c on a number of lines, and \$1 on two or three lines, while it is \$1.50 on No. 2 grain flooring. The following shows the lines advanced, with the new prices delivered on cars at Manitoba and other 50 cent freight points:

BRITISH COLUMBIA FIR.

Shiplap, advanced 50c to \$17.50.
No. 2 grain flooring advanced \$1.00 to \$22.00.
No. 2 ceiling advanced \$1 to \$22.
No. 3 ceiling advanced 50c to \$19.50.
No. 15-8 ceiling advanced 50c to \$18.50.
No. 2 ceiling advanced 50c to \$16.50.
No. 2 siding advanced \$1 to \$22.
No. 3 siding advanced 50c to \$19.50.

BRITISH COLUMBIA CEDAR.

No. 1-1 in. x 8 in. to 12 in., advanced \$1 to \$36.
Common boards advanced 50c to \$16.50.
Shiplap advanced 50c to \$17.50.

GRAIN AND PRODUCE.

WHEAT—The local market has been quiet this week. It was expected that Manitoba farmers would market considerable wheat this month, but so far they have not done much, and the grain delivery season is now almost over until after seeding, when whatever surplus held by the farmers will be brought out. The small deliveries this month would indicate that the

farmers are not holding as much wheat as was supposed. Prices have been easier. In the Winnipeg street market as high as 88c was paid to farmers early in the week, but yesterday prices were down to 84c for best samples, and at Manitoba country market about 82c was paid to farmers at 18c freight rate points to Fort William. Deliveries were light. There was very little business doing in spot wheat, and prices ranged from 98c to 97c for No. 1 hard, afloat basis, Fort William. On Wednesday there were sales at the lower quotation. On Thursday prices were about 1-2c higher, and yesterday 97c was quoted for spot No. 1 hard. May delivery about 2 1-2c premium over cash.

FLOUR—The market is steady and prices unchanged. We quote: Patent, \$2.50; best bakers \$2.30; second bakers \$1.90; XXX, \$1.40 per sack of 98 lb., with discount of 5c net.

MILLEED—Prices are unchanged. We quote bran at \$11 and shorts \$13 per ton in bulk. Large lots \$1 per ton less.

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 higher and now quoted at \$17 to \$18 per ton. Oil cake \$22 per ton.

OATMEAL—The market is firm and the tendency upward. Dealers are selling to the trade at \$2 for sacks of rolled, though some meal bought earlier before the recent advances, has been selling at \$1.85 to \$1.90.

BARLEY—Nominal. Practically nothing doing. Value irregular. Some will be wanted for seed, but anything held has been held at such high prices that possible buyers have been discouraged from taking hold. One car of feed barley was offered at 33c in the country, equal to 39 1-2c on track here, freight paid. We quote feed barley nominal at 33 to 40c. Seed barley nominal at 45 to 50c.

OATS—Prices are about the same as last week. 1 1/2 to 35c per bushel of 34 pounds is asked at country points for choice oats, and we hear of a few cars selling at about this price, for No. 1 white. 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.

CORN—We quote 40c per bush. of 56 lbs. for cars on track here. Some cars have changed hands at 39c, but this is regarded as below the market value.

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

BUTTER—Dairy—Market is steady. 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. Much of the butter offering is not really fresh goods, and this applies to rolls as well as tubs, a good deal of the latter being worked over goods.

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

EGGS—Eggs are easier, and the market is irregular. Prices are lower. Dealers have been selling eggs this week at 14 to 15c, which cost them 16c. Receipts are fairly liberal. We quote fresh at 14 to 15c, and hatched 10 to 20c.

DRESSED POULTRY—Poultry is scarce and prices firm. Good chickens