

BRING DOWN THE RENTS.

We have always been in the habit of saying exactly what we think on all questions concerning the interest of the business men of Winnipeg. The matter we are about to refer to, and which is sufficiently indicated by the caption to the article, may perhaps grate a little upon the feelings of some who happen to be landlords, but it cannot be helped. There is no use in trying to deny the fact that rents in this city are beyond all reason. They are more than double what is paid in Eastern cities with three times the population. In a country like this where the cost of building is heavy, it is only to be expected that rents should be somewhat higher than in the Eastern Provinces, where labor and material are plentiful and can be had at a moderate cost. But at the same time the exaction (if we cannot call it extortion) of such exorbitant rents as have been paid and are now being paid in Winnipeg cannot be excused on this ground. Business men in every branch of trade to-day know it and feel that they are exhausting their best energies not so much to benefit themselves and their families, as to put money into the hands of a landlord.

Such a state of things cannot long exist. In the natural course of events it must come to a close, and the sooner the better. A few landlords who live by the means derived from rents may feel the change a little, but if they have the interests of the city which has done well for them and placed them in their present comfortable circumstances at heart, they will submit to a more reasonable state of things.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

The prospectus of the new Atlantic Cable Company has been received from England and application for an act to incorporate the new company will be made at the approaching session of Parliament. The proposed cable will be laid between some point on the west coast of Ireland to some point on the lower coast of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. It is stated that there will be a clause introduced into the new company's prospectus which will give perfect security to the public against amalgamation with the monopolists. The company will contract with the public for ten years under heavy penalties not to exceed a charge of twenty-five cents a word.

Philip Lang of New York recently baked a barrel of "Pillsbury's Best" (spring wheat flour) and a barrel of "White Light" (winter wheat), and found only a difference of 4½ pounds of bread in favor of spring wheat flour.

A baking test by another party produced 287½ pounds of bread from a barrel of winter wheat to 302 2-3 pounds from a barrel of spring wheat flour. Another test was made with flour from Fultz and Mediterranean wheat; the Fultz yielded 208 pounds and the Mediterranean 287 pounds. A barrel of flour in another test made from Fultz and Mediterranean wheat mixed yielded 204 pounds of bread.

M. Dumas recommends water saturated with alum for extinguishing fires, its value being supposed to be due to the coating it gives to objects wet with it, which prevents contact with the oxygen of the air, and thus diminishes the rapidity of the combustion. The Minister of the Interior has recommended that the firemen of the French towns be supplied with facilities to use such solutions of alum.

Abundant rain has fallen in California, about the same amount as in 1880, and the *Journal of Commerce*, San Francisco, predicts a crop of 70,000,000 bushels of wheat this year in California.

The products of the Dominion fisheries for the last year is valued at \$10,088,072. The value of the fish exported from Canada for the fiscal year is \$8,898,884. The eggs and fish laid down in hatcheries were: Salmon, 6,612,000; salmon trout, 8,350,000; speckled trout, 200,000; white fish, 43,064,000—a total of 58,162,000. The total expense of fish capture service was \$31,223.

The wheat crop of the United States for 1881 was 390,380,000 bushels, and for 1882 it was 502,780,600 bushels, being an increase of 122,509,510 bushels, or 32.2 per cent. The corn crop for 1881 was 1,194,916,000, and for 1882 it was 1,624,917,800 bushels, showing an increase over the previous year of 430,001,800, or 36 per cent. The products of agriculture constituted about 80 per cent of the total exports of the United States during the year 1882.

The Postmaster General's report shows that in no former year has there been a more general increase of business in all branches of the service. Reference is made to the increase in expenses necessitated by the growth of Manitoba and the North-west. Note is also made of the valuable assistance of the C. P. R. in maintaining and extending mail communications. During the past fiscal year 56,200,000 letters and 11,300,000 postal cards were sent by post in the Dominion, of which 2,000,000 letters and 170,000 post cards were posted in Manitoba, Kewatin and the North-west. The total revenue was over \$2,000,000, and the expenditure \$440,090 more. The revenue in Manitoba and the North-west was \$75,300, and the expenditure \$93,400. The total postal revenue shows an increase of 15½ per cent over the previous year. In Manitoba the postage nearly doubled within the year.

The aggregate traffic of the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada for seven weeks in 1883 was \$2,149,204, against \$1,948,719 in the corresponding period last year, showing an increase of \$200,485. Receipts for week ended the 17th ult. were \$295,249 against \$184,715 in the like week of 1882.

Winnipeg Wholesale Markets.

A decidedly better feeling pervades all lines of business this week. The fourth of March, a day to be dreaded by many, has passed, and the result has been much more satisfactory than was anticipated. A general feeling of security prevails, and from now on merchants' affairs will move along easily. Every branch of trade shows a decided improvement, and prospects for them all promise well.

AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY.

The blockade on the railway has put a temporary stop to business in this line. There is a large amount of goods in transit and the leading houses are expecting large receipts every day. Reports from the country districts are very encouraging, and no doubt a big business will be done during the coming season. Collections have been very fair, but there is still considerable to be desired in this respect.

BOOTS AND SH.

Business in this line has not changed much from last week. Sorting orders and making preparations for spring make up the principal part of the volume of trade. Spring orders are coming in, and these are being attended to. Collections are very fair, and better than they have been for some time past.

CLOTHING.

The quietness which has been reported for the past week or two cannot be said to have disappeared. Spring orders from outlying districts are coming in very well, and hands are busy in filling them. With the opening of spring and the influx of immigration a good trade is expected. Collections have not improved much, but still there is nothing particular to complain of in this respect.

CROCKERY AND GLASSWARE.

There is very little doing at present in this line, and the houses are not pushing business, preferring to keep the goods in the warehouse rather than risk them outside. A good trade is expected with the opening of spring.

DRY GOODS.

In this as in nearly every other line of trade there is a brighter state of affairs than we have had to report for some time. Travelers on the road are doing very fairly for this time of the year, and report an excellent prospect for spring trade. Collections have improved. Fourth of March notes were better attended to than was anticipated. The stocks held throughout the country are heavy, and on this account trade is not being pushed by the wholesale houses with as much vigor as they would were the retailers' shelves more clear.

DRUGS AND CHEMICALS.

The past week has been very quiet, more so than has been the case for some time. Collections are very fair, but cannot yet be said to be good. Travelers report a good prospect for trade in the spring.

FANCY GOODS AND SMALLWARES.

During the week there has been little movement of goods beyond the every day sorting up orders that keep coming in. There is, however, a generally better feeling. Collections are re