

man of the Water, Light and Telephone Commission in his annual report just submitted recommends that the rates be further reduced at an early date.

According to the report of the superintendent of the waterworks department there had been laid during the year 9,000 feet of six-inch mains and 8,800 feet of four-inch, with the necessary fire hydrants, valves, etc., at a cost of \$13,261. Three hundred water services were installed at a cost of \$10.10 each. The total number of water services now in use is 1,400. Altogether there is now laid down a trifle more than fifteen miles of water mains, while 102 fire hydrants have been installed.

In the telephone department 10,000 pounds of galvanized wire were used, and 39,000 feet of other kinds of wire. Two hundred feet of okinite cable and 4,200 feet of encased cable were strung. One hundred lines were added to the switchboard, 240 telephones and fifteen exchange bells were installed.

In the electric light department 82,000 feet of wire were strung, and twenty-four metres and ten arc lights placed in service.

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#### IRON AND STEEL MARKETS.

The bulk of the present metal business is mainly for large undertakings, says a Chicago report. Big concerns are the prominent factors. Public works of vast dimensions are calling for tonnages that run up into five figures. Only a few of these are needed to give tone to the market in its present condition, even if the rank and file of the consuming trade remains back in semi-obscure. Pig iron buying has been heavy. January is starting out under a good deal of pressure. In this respect the east having been much more active than the west.

It is notable that much of this enquiry is for shipment during the first half of the year. It is the guess of some pig iron men that considerable iron will still have to be bought for use during the first half of the year, and it would not be unexpected to them if the present activity in the east were to extend soon to the west.

There have been actual advances in some of the steel products within the past week, including sheets, tin plates and wire products. And because advances are anticipated in other departments there has been considerable buying, thus giving to the present market a livelier hue than it might otherwise possess. The net result has been that the order books of the steel mills are weighted down with a heavier tonnage of contracts than they have ever before possessed. To prevent themselves from being completely swamped the large steel makers have lately taken steps for a further capacity of production. It has just been decided by the steel corporation to increase its production in the Pittsburgh district nearly a million tons per year.

#### TORONTO MARKETS.

Toronto, Jan. 25th, 1906.

Chemicals, Drugs, Etc.—The market is steady with few features of a noteworthy character. The staple drugs have made no appreciable change in values, but no great volume of trade is passing. In fact business is a little on the dull side, a character which it seems is shared by that in most other centres at present.

Flour and Grain.—The absence of snow and consequent badness of the country roads, has militated against any large movement of grain, and business for the week has been extremely dull. Quotations for wheat are just as they were last week. The export price offered for ninety per cent. patents in buyers' bags is \$3.10 to \$3.15. Shorts and bran are still very firmly held owing to scarcity. The market for barley is a little unsettled. Oats are firm and so are peas. In rye, corn and buckwheat, there is but little change and not much is doing.

Groceries.—Dullness has been the rule in both city and country markets and without doubt trade is being affected by the abnormally mild season and the absence of good sleighing roads. Sugars are a little on the heavy side at the recent decline. Other lines of staples, in respect to values, remain unaltered. Canned strawberries are out of the market. Other canned goods are held firmly. Dried fruits present no feature. They are moving with about average freedom for this time of the year.

Hardware.—Trade in both small hardware and heavy metals is described as

quite satisfactory, though scarcely so great in volume as was the case last month. The prices of pig iron and iron products keep high, and most of the other staple metals continue also at the high figure referred to in our last report.

Hides, Skins and Leather.—No change has taken place in prices, though their tendency is weaker. The quality of hides coming in is quite poor, but this is always looked for at this time of the year, and not much improvement is looked for before March or April. In the leather trade not much is doing, but prospects continue fair for a good season's business.

Live Stock.—Briskness was not a distinguishing feature of the cattle trade this week, but for this the bad weather is largely accountable. The exporters offered were but few and they sold at steady prices. Few choice butchers' animals were offered, but demand was small. Really choice are required. The demand for stockers and feeders is light. There was an active enquiry for calves. Sheep and lambs were also in fairly brisk demand. Hogs are scarce in nearly all parts, and prices are advancing steadily.

Provisions.—Butter coming in is mostly of poor quality, of which there is more than a sufficiency, while better qualities are largely absent. The market is easier. A steady demand exists for cheese. Receipts of poultry are light.

Seeds.—There is but little enquiry, but prices are steady at before-quoted prices.

Wool.—No business is being done, but prices are nominally quoted the same as before.

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