

THE BUSINESS SITUATION

Saturday, March 30

The weather continues favorable for business and is daily growing milder. Reports from country districts say that the roads are breaking up and vehicular traffic is now more difficult which has a tendency to shut off a certain amount of business from the stores. Farmers are busy getting ready for spring seeding. Implements trade is booming for the time being. Country dealers being pressed hard for spring machinery deliveries, which in turn is reacting upon the wholesale trade here. The influx of new settlers, farm laborers, etc., continues. Building operations are commencing to be quite active, especially in the city, and there are already a number of new residences and other buildings nearing completion. Building mechanics are all finding employment with the advance of spring conditions. Values at Winnipeg in a wholesale way continue steady and there have been but few changes this week. None of the leading commodities have changed in price. Jobbing houses have pretty nearly finished their spring shipments to country points and are now turning their attention to the sorting trade. Bank clearings continue to show expansion, the report for the week ending Thursday showing about \$24,000 increase over the previous week and about \$150,000 over the same week last year.

WINNIPEG MARKETS

Saturday, March 30.

DRY GOODS

This week has brought what is practically the close of the active shipping season for spring goods and the bulk of the placing orders may now be said to have been shipped. The business has been large, much more so than the trade anticipated when the travellers first set out for orders, and wholesale merchants are correspondingly well pleased with results. Travellers are now on the road for sorting orders and with fall underwear. Attention will now be devoted to the sorting trade and if results are as good as they have been with the placing business there will be no complaints heard so far as sales are concerned. Collections are still very slow and it is with this part of the business that merchants are grumbling. They find it difficult to get any money at all on many accounts and even some of the best ones are slow. Values seem to be holding steadily so far as this market is concerned.

DRUGS.

Demand is steady and prices here show very few changes. Iodine is lower the inside quotation here now being \$1.50 per ounce as against \$1.75 before the drop. Oil of peppermint has advanced 7½¢ per ounce owing to a new ruling of the customs officials which places this commodity under spirits classification which makes a great difference in the duty. Druggists claim that the pure oil of commerce is wholly free of alcohol but that attempts are sometimes made to adulterate it with alcohol. Winnipeg drug prices will be found on page 718.

FISH.

The Lenten demand still keeps the fish market in an active state and we note a good business being done by local dealers. Fresh spring salmon from the Pacific coast is now in the market. Wholesale prices as follows: Whitefish, 3½¢ to 6½¢ per pound; pickled, 3½¢ to 4½¢; pickled, 2½¢; trout, 10¢; fresh spring salmon, 11¢ per lb.; salmon, 12½¢; halibut, 12½¢; Lake Superior herring, 20¢ per doz.; salt cod, 6½¢; Labrador herring, per barrel, \$1.00; salt mackerel, \$2.25 per cwt.; shad, 1½¢; piggy chickens, 18¢; boneless cod, 7½¢ lb.; boneless fish, 5½¢ lb.; finnan haddies, 7½¢ per pound; fresh sea cod, 10¢; 7½¢ lb.; kommy cod, 5½¢; flounders, 5½¢; smelts, 7½¢; mackerel, 13¢; shad, 10¢; bass, 13¢; eels, 10¢; oysters, select, \$2.15 per gallon; standard, \$2.00.

GREEN FRUITS.

The demand for green fruits continues to expand and there is now a good trade being done at local warehouses. Apples are becoming increasingly scarce and practically the only apples offering here now are some that have been brought in from Minneapolis. These are being jobbed at \$6.00 per barrel, an advance of 50¢ on previous quotations. California navel oranges have been unsettled as the market was filled up for a few days with cheap stock, which was sent here from Minneapolis to relieve the situation there and prices for this fruit were lower while it lasted. Next week an advance of 25¢ per box is looked for as the fruit has now to be brought in iniced cars. Tangerines are now in the market at prices given below. Also grape fruit. Strawberries are lower. Frozen cranberries are out. Lemons remain unchanged. Maple sugar and syrup are expected in soon. We quote: Apples, 5¢ per barrel. California navel oranges, per box, \$1.00 to \$1.75; bitter oranges, \$6.50 per case; lemons, per box, \$1.50; tangerines, half boxes, \$1.50; grape fruit \$5 per box, bananas, per bunch, \$3; Wisconsin cranberries, per barrel, \$10; cranberries, in boxes, \$3.50 per 40-pound box; strawberries, per box, 40 cents; figs, \$1.25 per 10-lb. box; onions, per lb., 2½¢; mince meat in 25-pound pails, 10¢ per pound; cartoon dates, per package of 1-pound; 10¢; new dates, 6¢; elder in kegs or barrels, 15¢ per gallon; honey, 1-pound jars, \$2.50 a dozen, maple sugar, 12¢, maple syrup, 2-pound tins, per dozen, \$2.25, half gallon tins, \$6.50 per dozen, gallons, \$12.00.

GROCERIES.

Demand is moderately large and the situation without special feature. Collections are poor. Canned goods remain unchanged. Cereals unchanged. Cured fish unchanged. Dried currants are a little easier although good stock is really worth as much as ever owing to its scarcity. There is, however, an easier feeling in prices for ordinary stock and we have reduced our quotations 1¢ all around, which seems to be about the amount of the decline. There is still a wide range in the quotations for Valencia raisins and these can be bought here 30-day anywhere from \$2.00 to \$2.75 per box. This is due to the unusual variety of stock and the prices about represent the difference in quality. California muscatel raisins are somewhat easier and prices have been marked down ¼¢ per pound. Dried apples are still firmer at 6¢ to 6½¢, and evaporated show corresponding strength. California dried fruits are practically unchanged, although there is a slightly easier feeling in apricots and we quote these ¼¢ lower than last week. Small prunes, which have been selling so cheap, are becoming scarce and have advanced ¼¢ per pound. It looks as if the crop has been pretty well cleaned up. The stock of salt in store here appears to have become about exhausted, and there are prospects of a shortage before navigation opens. Winnipeg prices will be found on page 718.

HARDWARE.

There is a good demand for shelf and heavy hardware for spring sale and shipments to country points are now going forward. Building hardware is in particularly good demand and the prospects are for a busy year in this line.

IMPLEMENTS.

Local wholesale houses are busy shipping. The demand for spring lines has been larger than it was thought could be possible when the year opened.

PAINTS, OILS AND GLASS.

Trade is active and prices here unchanged. Another decline in linseed oil prices is expected as the English market is weaker and it seems certain that as soon as navigation opens and imports can be made that prices here will go down to a basis corresponding with prices in the old country. Stocks of Manitoba oil are becoming very much reduced. Winnipeg quotations will be found on another page.

LUMBER.

Building operations have commenced on a more active scale and consequently there is a good demand for lumber. Wholesale men here report a good demand from all parts of the country. Price lists for 1901 have not yet been published.

LEATHER.

The demand for leather and kindred lines here is good and the prospects are for an active season's trade. Prices have not changed this week but we note a firmer feeling in the market and the chances seem to be in favor of higher prices in the early future.

SCRAP.

There is a fairly good demand for scrap iron and prices for this and other old materials rule steady as follows: No. 1 cast iron, free from wrought and malleable, \$12 to \$13 per ton. No. 2, \$4.00 to \$5 per ton; wrought iron scrap, \$7.00 per ton; heavy copper 10 to 12¢ per pound; red brass, 10¢ per pound; yellow brass, heavy, 8¢ per pound; light brass, 5¢ to 6¢ per pound; lead pipe or tea lead, 2 to 2½¢ per pound; rags, country mixed, 50¢ per 100 pounds, rubbers, free from rivets, buckles and articles, 5¢ per pound; zinc scrap 1¢ per pound; bones, clean, dry and bleached, \$5 to \$6 ton; bottles, quarts, 20¢ per dozen; pints, 12½¢ per dozen.

RUBBER GOODS

This week has marked the opening of the 1901 season and travellers have been busy in all parts of the country taking orders for summer and fall lines. A very large amount of business has already been booked here the orders exceeding in number and volume anything ever done before by Winnipeg houses. This was due partly to the favorable prices offered, but more to the increased requirements of the country. Prices have been maintained by manufacturers at the level of last year so far as the list is concerned, but the discounts have been increased so as to enable buyers to secure in some cases as much as 2½¢ per cent. off last year's prices. This has helped buying to some extent, especially cash buying.

STONE AND LIME.

Building material is in better demand now and the movement is becoming quite active. Prices remain as follows: Rubble stone, \$4.00 per cord; footings, \$5.50 per cord; broken stone, \$1.25 per cubic yard; white lime, 20¢ per bushel; grey lime, 15 to 16¢ per bushel; Veneer brick, \$12 per thousand; kiln run, \$11 per thousand.

GRAIN AND PRODUCE.

WHEAT—Without showing any active demand there has been an undertone of strength in the wheat markets during the past week which has held prices up and even caused a shade of advance in the face of generally bearish surroundings. The American speculative markets have been quite inactive and have worked in a very narrow range of fluctuation from day to day, but at the close of the week they show an advance of ¼¢ to ½¢ as compared with a week ago. The trade in corn in these markets has been active with an advance of 2½¢ recorded in the price and this no doubt has helped wheat. The primary receipts of wheat in the States have again been larger than for same week last year, and it is being suggested that the last crop must have been considerably underestimated. All news of the winter wheat crop in the States is excellent, and it is said that existing conditions are more favorable than in recent years, with a very large acreage under crop. Seeding of the spring wheat crop is just beginning in the more southerly districts and taking the whole spring wheat country the ground is plentifully supplied with moisture to insure a good start. In Europe the growing crops are as good, if not better, condition than usual at this time of year. Large weekly shipments of wheat and flour continue to leave North America for Europe, and Argentina is only shipping about half as much as last year, but with a full supply from Australia and fair quantities from Russia and Southeastern Europe the weekly shipments to European importing countries fully cover weekly requirements, and there is no anxiety shown as to future supply. The American visible supply decreased 400,000 bushels last week, compared to a decrease of 700,000 bushels the previous week, and an increase of 152,000 bushels for same week last year. The world's shipments were 7,651,000 bushels, against 7,655,000 bushels previous week and 8,381,000 bushels last year. The world's visible supply according to Bradstreet's, decreased 23,000 bushels, compared to a decrease of 773,000

bushels the previous week and a decrease of 765,000 bushels same week last year.

There is still no change in the situation as regards Manitoba wheat. The movement of cars from the country to Fort William shows some enlargement, but trade is inactive. Houses are firm and buyers indifferent. It will require some definite movement in the outside markets, or the opening of lake navigation to lead to activity here. Prices are about the same a week ago—1 hard \$14, 2 hard 7½¢, 3 hard 6¾¢, 3 northern 6½¢, tough 6½¢, hard 6½¢, tough 3 northern 5¾¢, a store Fort William spot or on track.

FLOUR—Prices hold steady as follows: Lake of the Woods, five roses, \$2.10; Red Patent, \$1.95; five roses, \$1.60; XXXX, \$1.35 per sack of 98 pounds. Ogilvie Milling Co., Hungarian, \$2.10; Glenora Patent, \$1.95; Alberta, \$1.75; Manitoba, \$1.60 and Imperial XXXX, \$1.25 per sack of 98 pounds.

MILLFEED—Demand is large and the supply decidedly inadequate. Bran is quoted at \$15 per ton and shorts at \$17.00 per ton delivered.

GROUND FEED—Ground feed is scarce owing to the small supplies of coarse grains. Pure oat chop is worth \$27 per ton delivered, mixed barley and oats \$25 per ton and corn is \$15.50 higher at \$21.50 per ton.

COUNTRY WHEAT—The country wheat market is dull. The top price quoted to farmers is 6½¢ per bushel for best grades of wheat, and from that prices range down to 5½¢ according to quality of grain and cost of freight.

OATS—The market holds about where it was last week. There is a steady demand for feed qualities here, and from the country there is a good demand for better grades for seed purposes. The supply of Edmonton oats is running short and some of the early oats have had to be brought in to supply the demand for seed. It is stated that many of the farmers in country districts are not able to buy seed oats for want of money and that the municipalities will come to the aid by advancing the seed against the farmers' notes. We quote Manitoba oats in carlots on track at 41 to 46¢ per bushel. Some higher prices than these have been asked this week for Manitoba oats, but not at all. Northern Alberta oats are quoted at 41 to 46¢ per bushel on track and the bulk of the sales being made at 42¢.

BARLEY—There is no barley offering in this market, so that prices are not obtainable.

CORN—Corn is dearer this week at 49 to 50¢, an advance of 1¢ over a week ago. This quotation is for No. 2 corn in carlots on track. Demand is moderately good.

FLAXSEED—None offering. HAY—There is a good demand for hay in the city and many enquiries are also being received from country points as well. Prices remain unchanged. We quote choice timothy hay \$8 to \$9 per ton in carlots on track here. Loose hay on the track is also worth \$8 to \$9 per ton.

POLTRY—Turkeys are quoted at 11 to 14¢ per pound. Chickens 7½ to 10¢; ducks, 9¢; geese, 9¢.

GAME—Market nominal as no game is now offering.

DRESSED MEATS—Beef is scarce and prices here hold firm and are showing incline to advance. Pork stock is out of the market. Values steady and unchanged. Mutton is abundant supply, and the market has declined to 7½¢ per pound for frozen a drop of ½¢ from last week. Hogs hold firm at unchanged prices. We quote: Beef, fresh, 6½ to 7½¢ per pound; veal 7 to 8½¢ per pound; mutton, frozen 7½¢ per pound; fresh mutton 10 to 11½¢ per pound; hogs 9½ to 10½¢ per pound.

BUTTER—Creamery—The market is in a nominal condition as there is no creamery butter offering from the hands. Dealers are selling free stock at about 22¢ per pound.

BUTTER—Dairy—The market is weaker and we hear of cheap sales being brought here yesterday. Prices as low as 12¢ per pound net. The city are reported to be quite good but choice table butter is scarce and hard to get. Most of the stock here now are second grade goods. We quote: Choice dairy butter in rolls, 12 to 14¢ per pound, country basic, second grades, 8 to 12¢ per pound.

CHEESE—Manitoba cheese is being sold to the retail trade here at 10¢ per pound and is not meeting much demand at that figure.

EGGS—The market has been weak owing to large receipts from the