

## THE BUSINESS SITUATION

Saturday, March 31.

The weather has continued mild this week and spring trade has opened up considerably in consequence. The full tide will set in by Easter if the weather remains favorable. Wholesale trade is fairly active as far as groceries and provisions are concerned and clothing and foot and shoe travellers are starting out for fall and winter orders. Values remain firm and the general tendency of prices is still upward. Building operations will commence in earnest in a very short time. Contractors have been figuring this week on a number of large jobs, among them the new C. P. R. station and hotel. From present indications all classes of labor will be in good demand at wages at least as high as last year. Railway traffic is increasing and a large number of people have been brought in from the east and south who contemplate settling in the country. Bank clearings to Thursday were \$141,644 smaller than last week, but \$64,058 larger than a year ago. Mercantile collections continue very slow and there are a good many requests for renewals and extensions. Interest rates are a little easier if anything, and range from 6 to 8 per cent at the banks according to name.

## WINNIPEG MARKETS

Saturday, March 31.

## BUILDING MATERIAL.

Local white brick is quoted at \$11 per thousand. Stonewall rubble stone is quoted for spring delivery at \$3.50 per cord, Stonewall footings at \$3.50; Stony Mountain rubble at \$4.00; white lime at 20c per bushel, and grey lime Stony Mountain and Tyndall at 16c per bushel.

## DRUGS.

The only change to note is a decline of 50c per ounce in the price of cocaine. Business is fairly active and the general tone of the market firm. Collections are slow.

## BOOTS AND SHOES

With the advent of April 1, increased interest is being shown in this branch of trade. Travellers are now making up their samples for the road—that is those of them who are not already out, as a number have not waited for the first of April to start out. Prices are of course firm. Last season there was some irregularity in the market. Some large manufacturers had large stocks of leather have been exhausted bought before the big advance in leather, and they did not follow the leather market by advancing their boots and shoes in proportion. Their stocks of leather has been exhausted and there is now a general advance in leather goods for the new season, of about 5 to 10 per cent as compared with a year ago. Heavy leathers have advanced proportionately more than fine stock, consequently, heavy staple line of boots and shoes will show a greater advance than fine stock. Regarding styles for the new season, the tendency is in the direction

of a broad, comfortable shoe, for both men's and women's wear the narrow toes which were on the vogue last year are now entirely out. Tan shoes promise to be in favor. Lace shoes find considerable favor for fine city trade, as compared with button boots, but the country belle still demands a button boot for her "Sunday" pair.

## FISH.

There is no change to note in prices. Demand continues good and supplies plentiful. We quote: Whitefish, frozen, per pound, 5 to 5 1-2c; pickerel, 3 1-2c; pike, 3c; trout, 10c; salmon, 12 1-2c; salmon, round cuts, 10c; halibut, 11c; salt whitefish, in half barrels, \$6.50; haddies, 7c; salt cod, 7c; mackerel, fresh, 15c; fresh herring, 20c; Labrador herring, in half barrels, \$4.00; oysters, standards, in bulk, \$2.00; select, \$2.25.

## FUEL.

Stocks of wood in the city are now quite large and are being augmented every day. Teaming is now getting bad, however, and the movement will probably soon get down to supplying actual requirements. Dealers look forward to a good spring trade as the small traders will go out of business now that the snow is gone. Mild weather has curtailed the demand of heating coal to a large extent. For quotations see "prices current" page.

## GREEN FRUITS.

All kinds of green fruits hold firm at quotations of last week. Some extra fine apples are bringing as high as \$6 but the general range of prices is from \$3.50 to \$5.50 per barrel. We quote leading lines as follows: California navel oranges, \$4.25 per case for regular sizes; California seedlings, \$3.50; California lemons, per box, \$1.75; Messina lemons, \$1.75; bananas, \$3.00 to \$3.50; California grape fruit, \$5.00 per case; apples, winter, \$3.50 to \$6.00 per barrel; Cape Cod cranberries per barrel, \$2.00; coconuts, per dozen, 50c; Grenoble walnuts, 15c; Tarragon almonds, 15c; filberts, 12c; peanuts, green, 5c; roasted 12c; pecan nuts 15c per pound; maple sugar, per pound 11c; apple cider, 35c per gallon in barrels and all barrels; fruit cider put up in 20 and 30 gallon kegs, per gallon, 40c; California layer figs in 10 pound boxes, \$1.40; new Smyrna in glove boxes, \$2.00 per dozen; 10 lb. boxes, \$1.50 per box, dates, 7c per lb. in 1 lb cartons, 10c; honey in 1-lb glass jars, per dozen jars, \$2.50; American red onions, 3c per lb.; jam, in 7 lb pails, per dozen, \$6.50, in jars, 4 1-2 per dozen in barrels, per dozen, \$2.25.

## GROCERIES.

A fair active trade has been done throughout the week, and the jobbing trade has been looking ahead to the summer demand for heavy goods, and placing orders for fresh supplies to be delivered after the opening of navigation. Collections continue slow. New pack canned goods will cost more this year than they did at the opening of the 1919 season. The new prices for future delivery of Ontario fruits and vegetables show, for instance, an advance of 10c per dozen on tomatoes over the opening quotations of a year ago. Raspberries will cost according to the new quotations about \$2.35 per case to lay down at Winnipeg, whereas they are now being regularly sold to the retail trade at from \$1 to \$2.25. Canned meats are firm and likely to advance, as packers have put prices up again. Coffee quotations remain unchanged, but the market is very firm. Split peas have advanced about 10c per sack to job-

bers, owing to scarcity. This will probably affect the price to retailers at an early date. Dried fruits are firm and Valencia raisins becoming very scarce. Wholesale houses have been borrowing from one another to fill orders. It is expected that \$2.35 will be the lowest price for layers after this week. Woodenware manufacturers have notified the trade that hereafter corks for syrup pails will be charged extra. They have hitherto been supplied with the pails. This practically amounts to a slight advance. Spring orders for carlots of salt to be delivered after navigation is open have been coming in freely. Teas are very firm and recent purchases of Indias show an advance of 1-2c per lb. Low grade teas are especially affected by the advancing tendency of the market.

## HARDWARE.

The trade has been recently advised of an advancing tendency in the price of barbed wire and the present quotation of 4c per lb, f.o.b., Winnipeg, is likely to be exceeded shortly. There seems to be no prospect of a let up in prices this season so far. At the factories there has been an advance of about \$1 per ton. The present high cost of wire would justify jobbers in charging more than 4c per lb. here, but so far no action has been taken looking to an advance. Bar iron appears to continue very firm in price. In fact one eastern mill has refused to receive any more orders at present prices and another has notified the trade of an advance of 10c per 100 lbs. New stocks of shot shells are arriving and show an advance of 15c per hundred.

## RUBBER FOOTWEAR.

The first of April begins a new season for boots and shoes, rubber footwear, etc. In the case of rubber footwear there has been a good deal of speculation as to prices, but no announcement will be made until April 1. All the Canadian rubber shoe manufacturers are working in sympathy, and all have agreed to maintain prices, so that there is not likely to be any cutting of the new list rates. It is understood that the new list of rubber footwear will show an advance of about 5 to 7 per cent. This does not mean, however, that prices to the trade will be advanced to this extent. In fact, it is not certain that there will be any material advance in the cost of the goods, as the discount to be given from the list will fix the prices. The increase in the list price will enable retailers, who sell at list prices to make a better profit on rubber footwear, providing the discount is increased in proportion, which is expected will be done. The discount to be given, however, will not be announced until April 1, and in fact manufacturers do not meet until March 31 to decide on the discount.

## LUMBER.

An advance of 25 to 50 cents will be made in British Columbia lath. Owing to the high price of pine lath, there has been an increased demand for British Columbia lath, and some has been coming this way. Cedar shingles are firm, at \$2.35 delivered at 7c cent freight rate points in Manitoba, and there is some talk of a possibility of an advance during the present season.

## PAINTS, OILS AND GLASS.

Prepared paints have been advanced this week by Winnipeg houses 10c per gallon. This is due to the continued stiffness of raw material. Turpentine is also 1c per gallon dearer. Other