

THE BUSINESS SITUATION

Winnipeg, Saturday, April 30.

The "boom" in wheat growing out of speculative manipulation of the war excitement is one of the principal features of the week. Manitoba has very little wheat to sell, however, the crop being closely cleaned up for the season, but a few fortunate holders will make something. The millers, who hold the most of the wheat, will make well, through the big advance in flour, if the prices hold. Wheat seedling in Manitoba is practically finished. A heavy gale of wind early in the week caused some fear of damage to the crop from shifting the loose earth, but no very serious reports have come to hand. A few years ago a gale such as that which prevailed this week, under similar circumstances, would have done great damage, as farmers then sowed much grain broadcast or with the old style drills. The new class of drills now almost exclusively used have greatly reduced the possibility of damage from high winds after seeding. Hardly any broadcast sowing is now done in Manitoba. Rains following the wind did much good to the crop prospect. Navigation is now fully open, the first steamers having worked into our Lake Superior ports on April 24. The war is affecting the price of many commodities besides wheat, corn, oats, flour, millstuffs, cured meats, etc., being higher in the United States, and some of these commodities are sympathetically affected in the local market. It is also believed that the war will retard the development of our mining districts materially, capital always being conservative under such conditions as now prevail. Local business prospects continue very favorable, the previously encouraging outlook being further improved by the prospect of additional railway enterprises being undertaken this season. Bank clearings at Winnipeg continue to show a large increase over previous years.

WINNIPEG MARKETS

Winnipeg, Saturday, April 30

DRY GOODS.

Sorting trade is not particularly active yet. In the clothing branch there is very little sorting trade, but a fair business in dry goods. Orders for the fall trade, however, are coming in well and a large amount of business has already been booked.

FISH.

No fishing is being done yet in the Manitoba lakes. It is now close season for all lake fish except whitefish and trout. Fresh caught white are expected in next week, and fresh Lake Superior trout will soon be coming, now that navigation is open. In the meantime the demand is being supplied with refrigerated fish. Fresh caught salmon is coming more freely. Bulk oysters and haddies are now about out of season.

GREEN FRUITS.

Recent arrivals of California lemons have not been up to the mark in quality and some came in bad condition this week, being soft. About this time of year California lemons are not good shipping quality. In about six weeks or so new California lemons will come in again. In the meantime the trade will likely have to look for Mediterranean fruit, which, owing to the war is somewhat uncertain, and prices will likely be higher. In oranges the season for California navels is drawing to a close and an advance of 25c is looked for at once on navels. Seedlings are steady. Bananas have been coming along all right so far, but the feeling is firm on account of the war and Central American troubles. Large stocks of old apples are held for the time of year, of which the average quality is very poor. Some very good stock in russets, genotins, etc., can be had yet. Strawberries are coming irregularly. Pie plant has been dropping fast and is now down to \$1.75 per box. A few cherries have arrived, but they were not fit for re-shipment, and sold at a loss. Prices are: Navel oranges, \$3.75 to \$4.00; California seedling oranges, \$3.00 to \$3.25; bananas, per bunch, \$2.25 to \$3.50, as to size; California lemons, \$3.75 to \$4 per box; apples, \$4 to \$4.50 per barrel for good to choice; off quality, \$2 to \$3.50 per barrel, as to condition; pineapples, \$5 per dozen; pie plant, \$1.75 per box; strawberries, \$6 per case of 24 quarts; coconuts, \$1 per dozen; Sicily filberts, large 11c to 12c per lb; Grenoble walnuts, 14c; figs, clones, 10 lb boxes, \$1.25 to \$1.40, as to quality; 50 lb boxes, 17c per lb; dates, 6 1-2 to 7c per lb; Tarragona almonds, 12 1-2 to 13c; peanuts, green, 9c; peanuts, roasted, 12c; pecans, 14 to 15c; strained honey, 7 1-2 to 10c per lb; maple sugar 11 to 12c; syrup per dozen 1-2 gallon tins, \$7; apple cider, 35c per gallon in barrels and half barrels.

GROCERIES.

There are advances in a number of commodities, owing largely to the war. Sugars are up sharply. Two advances have been reported at the refineries since last Saturday morning, and it is expected that our telegraphic reports to-day from Montreal and Toronto, which will come to hand a little later and will appear on another page of this issue, will show another advance. Winnipeg prices have been advanced 1-8c and another 1-8c advance is expected to take place very soon, possibly by Monday. Sugars have advanced sharply at New York and in Europe. Coffee is very firm at the recent advance. Oatmeal is again higher. Beans have advanced 10c per bushels. Japan rice is 1-8c higher and very firm. Canned and cured meats have advanced sharply in the United States and higher prices are looked for here. Starch is higher also in the United States and it is expected Canadian manufacturers will advance prices, as corn is costing higher. Tapioca is looking up in price.

HARDWARE, PAINTS.

A sharp advance is reported on rope, which is affected by the war, which will check the exportation of fibre from the Philippine Islands, which are Spanish possessions. Prices here have advanced 1-2c on Manila and steel both. The advance may not affect binder twine at once, as the supplies of raw material for this season's output are practically all in, and indeed, the twine is nearly all sold now.

White lead will likely be advanced here on Monday 25 cents per 100 lbs. over quotations given on another page.

LUMBER.

Business is good and prices are firm. The interesting feature of the trade locally is the squabble over the city contract for the current year. The tender was first awarded to Dick, Banning & Co., but was later cancelled on the ground that the advertisement had not allowed time enough for receiving tenders. Now a call is being made for fresh tenders. The action of the council is very annoying to the firm which was first awarded the contract.

WOOD FUEL.

Prices are easy and the supply is liberal. The tender of J. G. Hargrave to deliver 200 cords of tamarac for the city, at the city quarry, at \$1.34 per cord, has been accepted. This price includes hauling the wood a considerable distance.

GRAIN AND PRODUCE.

WHEAT—This has been a week of great excitement in the wheat markets. The Commercial did not think wheat would be advanced very much above last week's prices on account of the war, as prices were already high and the wheat trade was not in danger of any great interruption from the war. A "boom" nevertheless set in this week in wheat, though it can hardly be considered to be a legitimate one. It is probable that the general excitement caused by the war has simply been made use of to manipulate the market. Prices advanced 6 to 7c in United States on Monday, and made a further 1 to 2c gain on Tuesday, dropped about 1c on Wednesday, held their own on Thursday, and dropped 2c yesterday (Friday). The local situation was excited and prices correspondingly higher with the advance elsewhere. Though there was much talk of big prices, the actual amount of business done was small, one very good reason being that there is not the stuff available with which to do much business even if there had been buyers. But even with the very limited supply of Manitoba wheat, there were decidedly more sellers than buyers at the outside prices. No. 1 hard, afloat Fort William, sold at from \$1.17 to \$1.20 on Monday, showing an advance of 4 to 7c over Saturday last. On Saturday last the market closed at \$1.13, though later in the afternoon \$1.14 was offered. On Tuesday there were sales at \$1.23 to \$1.23 1-2, one or two good sized lots being put through at these figures, and in the morning \$1.21 to \$1.25 was touched. The market held about \$1.20 on Wednesday and Thursday, but dropped to \$1.18 on Friday. Yesterday afternoon the feeling was decidedly weaker, and while \$1.18 was quoted for No. 1 hard, Fort William, for shipment from country points, the principal buyers would not offer over \$1.16. As the farmers are now getting through with seeding, they will no doubt quickly market what little surplus wheat they hold, if the prices hold up long enough. The outlook cannot be regarded, however, as very stable. Wheat receipts at Fort William last week were 106,000; shipments, 35,000; in store, 933,000.

FLOUR—The big bulge in wheat will be a great thing for the millers if it holds out long, as they are the principal owners of the wheat left in the