

## THE BUSINESS SITUATION

Winnipeg, Saturday, Dec. 24.

So near Christmas business has of course been quiet this week with the wholesale houses, except in some special lines such as fruits. The retail trade, however, is now having its harvest, and the city retail trade promises to show up well for the season. Very fine stocks of holiday goods are being shown in Winnipeg this year, surpassing the efforts of most past years in this direction. With the jobbers the month of December as a whole will exceed last year in the volume of business, in almost every branch of trade, thus making up to some extent for the falling off in the fall months, as compared with last year. Clearing house returns of late weeks continue to show a considerable gain over the corresponding weeks of last year, which will also go toward making up the falling off in the fall months in bank clearings here. The grain movement is not large when measured by the quantity of wheat yet held in the country, but the December movement is larger than for the same month a year ago. Last year, it must be remembered, the great bulk of the crop was handled before the close of navigation, while this year the bulk of the crop has not yet moved forward. Wheat is 2 to 3c higher in the country markets this week, but still the tendency among the farmers is to hold on to their grain. Land sales are also reported to be large for the time of year, December usually being about the quietest month in this as in most other lines. The increased business doing in December this year compared with last, is to some extent at least, business which has been held back by the late grain movement.

### WINNIPEG MARKETS

Winnipeg, Saturday, Dec. 24

(All quotations, unless otherwise specified, are wholesale for such quantities as are usually taken by retail dealers, and are subject to the usual reduction on large quantities and to cash discounts.)

#### DRUGS.

The market for drugs is quiet. The few lines which are suitable to the holiday trade have been in good demand, but generally speaking business is quiet, and prices remain unchanged as given on another page.

#### GROCERIES.

The market is quiet this week. Sugars are unchanged. Teas are firm. Now dates are selling at 1-2c higher than quotations for old stock. Sultana raisins are held 1c higher. Lard is firm. Oatmeal easier.

#### GREEN FRUITS.

This has of course been a busy week with the fruit trade, and the Xmas trade has been a good one. The mild

weather has been specially favorable for this trade. There have been liberal supplies of oranges in, both in navels and Mexicans and prices are lower on both varieties. The demand has been largely for navels, though the Mexican fruit is good quality and by some considered the nicest for consumption. Some fine navel stock is shown. A few new lines specially for Xmas market have been brought in, including Catawba grapes, in fancy baskets, which have sold at \$5.50 per crate of 15 baskets. Some very fancy Malaga grapes have also been offered, at \$12 for extra fancy heavy kegs, \$10 for good ordinary sizes, and \$8 for common stock. New importations of sweet potatoes are offering at \$5 per barrel. Unfrozen cranberries are scarce. Good unfrozen stock has been offered at \$3 per barrel. New Pecan nuts have arrived. Further receipts of new almonds have also come to hand and prices are 2c lower. New stock in winter pears has also been received. Prices are: California navel oranges, \$1.50 to \$5, as to size. Mexican oranges, \$3.75 to \$4.50 box; bananas, per bunch, \$3 to \$2.50, as to size; Messina lemons, \$4.50 to \$5 box. Ontario apples, ordinary winter stock, \$3.50 to \$4, as to quality; fancy stock, \$4 to \$4.50 per barrel. Almeria grapes, \$3, \$10 and \$12 per keg as to quality and size. Catawba grapes, \$5.50 per crate of fifteen 3 lb. baskets; winter Nelles pears \$3 box; Easter pears \$3.50 box; cranberries, unfrozen, \$3 per barrel; sweet potatoes, \$5 per barrel. Coconuts, \$1 a dozen; Sicily filberts, large 11 to 12c per pound; Grenoble walnuts, 15c. Tarragona almonds, 14c; peanuts, green, 10c; roasted, 12c. Pezan nuts, 12c lb.; shell-ed walnuts, 24-2 to 26c per pound; strained honey, \$1-2 to 9c per pound; maple sugar, 11 to 12c; apple cider, 35c per gallon in barrels and half barrels. California figs, in boxes of ten bricks, \$2 per box; dates, 71-2c per pound; celery, 40c per dozen bunches.

#### HARDWARE.

Wholesale dealers are experiencing a period of quietness, which is usual at this time of the year. Beyond a little movement in lines which are in demand for Christmas purposes there are no unusual features. Prices remain unchanged at quotations given elsewhere.

#### PAINTS, OILS AND GLASS.

Interest is centred in the situation of turpentine. The advance of 2c noted in these columns last week has been followed by another of 5c, which makes the price now 70c per gallon for barrel lots and 75c per gallon for less quantities. The position of turpentine in eastern markets is very strong owing to the heavy exports—something like 14,000 barrels having gone to England, and the old country markets this year—and to the active demand from all parts of this continent. As far as production is concerned it may be said that this year's crop was a good one. Window glass is also very firm in this market, and it does not seem possible that any reductions can take place until next spring, as the stocks held are very small. Business generally is quiet and prices unchanged.

#### GRAIN AND PRODUCE.

WHEAT—The week ending to-day has shown more activity in the markets than has been for some time, and perhaps all the more so that it

was quite unexpected. With the approach of the Christmas and New Year holidays, a season of quietness was anticipated, but the unexpected has again happened. At the end of last week the markets closed flat and uninteresting, after a considerable show of strength for a few days previously. On Monday they opened with European markets stronger, and slightly higher, and the American markets followed, active and irregular, but gaining strength. Tuesday saw Liverpool slightly lower, and United States markets were slow and lost 1-2 to 3-4c per bushel. Wednesday all European markets were lower except Paris, but the American markets, after opening easier and remaining quiet the most part of the session, turned strong, and at the close had gained 3-4c to 11-4 over the close of the day before. The principal cause of strength seemed to be the increase of speculative buying in Chicago and other markets. Perhaps the main factor in initiating the advance, was the report of continued wet weather in Argentina, where harvest is progressing. The latest reports are of a more favorable character, better weather having returned, but the gathering of the crop is a week or two later than usual, and unless the weather to follow remains propitious more delay and probably considerable damage may result, to what was undoubtedly a very promising crop only three weeks ago. On Thursday and yesterday American markets continued strong and active, and the close showed a gain of 2c per bushel on the week. It is to be noted that English and continental markets have scarcely responded to the advance in the markets here, as Liverpool, for instance, only shows a gain on the week equal to 1-2c per bushel. World's shipments were 7,200,000 bushels but there was an increase on ocean passage of over a million bushels. The American visible supply showed an increase of 3,821,000 bushels, a very

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