

## THE BUSINESS SITUATION.

WINNIPEG, Saturday, Nov. 1, 1895.

Wholesale trade has improved very materially in some lines. In boots and shoes a good sorting trade is setting in, and in all season lines, business is good. The most remarkable movement has been experienced in clothing and fur goods, the demand in these lines having far exceeded all expectations, and stocks in some lines of clothing and furs have been practically cleaned out of all the wholesale warehouses in the city. The "boom" experienced in this class of goods is attributed to the demands of the large number of men who have been employed in the harvest, threshing, etc. The farm laborers from Eastern Canada have bought clothing liberally, and men who are going to the woods for the winter have also been laying in supplies of warm clothing, footwear, etc. Reports from some sections of the country are very favorable for the general retail trade, and in those districts where the harvest was early and where a large quantity of grain has been marketed, country merchants are doing a very large trade. We heard the name of one firm in a country town mentioned, whose business has frequently reached \$1,000 per day. This is certainly big business for a retail firm in a small country town. There are other sections, however, where business is backward, and in such districts the harvest was late, and threshing is very backward. This applies mainly to some of the far western and north-western sections of Manitoba and Eastern Assiniboia. Goods entered for consumption at Winnipeg during October show an increase of about 37 per cent. over the corresponding month of last year. Bank clearings at Winnipeg this week were the largest on record, and show an increase of about 42½ per cent. over the corresponding week last year. Collections, however, are still reported very backward from many sections, country merchants reporting that farmers have not threshed, or have not sold their grain. In other sections retailers are meeting their paper very well. It is the impression in the trade here, that country merchants who cannot make a good showing in collections this season, are either exceptionally badly situated as to locality, or they have not the necessary push and ability to get in their accounts. The feeling is that merchants, with the exception of a few isolated districts which met with some calamity, should be able to meet their paper well this year, and those who cannot do so need not expect as easy treatment as would be given them in an unfavorable crop year, the idea being that only incapacity could account for failure to collect up accounts closely this year.

There were 39 business failures reported in Canada this week, against 48 last week, and 40 in the corresponding week last year.

Reports from the United States this week note lower prices for leather, Bessemer pig iron, steel billets, wheat, wheat flour, corn, oats, cotton and refined sugar, and print cloths higher, although in special instances at western markets there is an upward tendency to prices of bar iron, hogs and sheep. Prices for coal are unchanged.

## WINNIPEG MARKETS.

WINNIPEG, SATURDAY AFTERNOON, Nov. 9.

[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.]

**BOOTS AND SHOES, LEATHERS, ETC.**—In the retail shoe trade, jobbers are just beginning to feel the effects of the sorting demand, and business has materially improved this week, the weather having been favorable for business. The advance sales for the fall trade in shoes, while ahead of last year, were not as large as some had expected, but the sorting trade is opening up well, and the demand is better than it has been for years, and dealers expect that all lines will be reduced very low this season. Retail dealers report that they have more or less trouble with customers on account of the advance in prices of shoes. On some lines in which the advances are not so easily detected by customers, this difficulty is not experienced. But in certain heavy lines of staple split leather goods, the sharp advance necessary in prices, owing to the high price of leather, is easily detected by the consumer. A customer who has been buying a certain staple shoe at say \$1.25 to \$1.50 and knows the shoe well, would easily detect the advance, which on such goods has been 20 to 30 per cent. Leather has not declined any further, and it is thought that prices will not be reduced much more at the present.

**CLOTHING AND FURS.**—This is about the most active of any wholesale branch of trade here. Business has been more than brisk for the past couple of weeks. In manufactured furs, stocks are already very low, the demand having far exceeded expectations. Everything in the line of fur coats has been well cleaned up, and dealers are pushing the factories to get more stock. In other fur goods there has been a large trade, but stocks are not so closely sold up as in men's fur coats. The same thing applies to overcoats and pea jackets as to fur coats. The trade in these has been very large and all the stocks in the city have been practically cleaned up. Ulsters and pea jackets have sold particularly well. Dealers have even been obliged to bring in goods by express to meet the demand. In fact, in all lines of heavy fall goods, including furs, overcoats, pea jackets, heavy suits, mitts, underclothes, socks, etc., the trade has experienced a regular "boom." Nothing like it for years has been experienced in this market.

**DRY GOODS.**—The rush experienced in the clothing trade has not extended to general dry goods. Business in advance orders has been moderately larger than for the past two years, and a better sorting trade is also looked for, but sorting business has not been particularly active yet. Of course, the movement is not expected so early in general dry goods as in clothing lines. All advances as to prices are very firm for both cotton and woolen goods, and spring lines of woolen fabrics are expected to show higher prices.

**GREEN FRUITS.**—We explained the apple situation fully last week, and it is not changed since. Eastern apples are not arriving in required quantities, and orders will have to be filled largely with United States stock. Some very fine Ben Davis are coming in from the south, and have been well received here. Jamaica oranges are now in the market, at \$5.50 per box. Cranberries are very firm at an advance of \$1 per barrel. In large lots Catawba grapes sell at 65c; smaller lots the same as quoted last week. California grapes are about done; also tomatoes. Prices are: Lemons \$9 per box; Jamaica oranges \$5.50 per box; bananas \$3 to \$4 per bunch as to size; apples, fancy varieties, such as snows, kings, etc., \$5 per barrel, ordinary winter apples firm at \$3.75 to \$4, as to variety; Catawba grapes

70c per basket, large lots 65c per basket, Malaga grapes \$7.50 per keg, canberries \$11 per barrel; figs, 11 ounce boxes \$1.50 per dozen; dates 7 to 7½ a lb; sweet potatoes \$5.50 per barrel; Spanish onions \$1.25 per crate.

**GROCERIES.**—There is a good deal of talk of scarcity of low grade Japan teas. Sugars hold steady. Eastern refiners are still quoting granulated at 4½c, and yellows at 4½ to 4¾c as to grade. There are now three estimates by experts of the sugar crop as follows: Mr. Geisler, 8,687,000 tons; Mr. Licht, 4,000,000, and The Economiste Francaise, 8,800,000 tons. A fourth estimate of the beet crop is made to-day by the International Association of Berlin, giving a total of 8,679,928 tons, to which should be added for other countries not included an average production of 100,000, equals 8,779,928 tons. The outlook is therefore for a continued firm sugar market. Dried fruits are very firm, raisins, currants and prunes leading the advance. Currants have sold here in large lots at 8-16c advance and valencias and prunes are very firm. There is a large trade in this market this season in California fruits, both canned and dried. The California canned goods are beginning to cut some figure here, with promise of increasing growth in this trade. Now California table raisins are in the market.

**HARDWARE, PAINTS, ETC.**—Large stocks are in or coming in for the winter and spring trade, before the close of navigation, to take advantage of the lower lake and rail rates. Prices are steady. Glass has been about the most active line, and prices are firm for glass here. At Montreal glass advanced 10c per 100 feet.

**RAW FURS.**—The fur season is beginning to open. Two or three small lots have been sent in here, one coming from British Columbia. A few near-by furs are also coming in and are improving in quality. Most of the skins so far are skunk, and these are now becoming prime. Some good No. 2 skunk have come in. A few bear have also come, but have been mostly poor. Bear killed after this date should be fairly good, but they will not be prime until about the end of the month. Badger skins are fairly good now. It was thought that the big furs reported in the north country the past summer would prove very damaging to the fur trade, but reports say the best fur sections were not burnt over, and indications are said to be favorable for a large catch of furs. Prices are not fixed yet. The best skunk would be worth about 70c. Some animals cannot be killed now, as they are protected by the close season.

## GRAIN AND PRODUCE.

**WHEAT.**—The tendency of prices in leading markets has been lower this week, influenced by rains in the winter wheat states, which have improved the crop outlook there. Large receipts of spring wheat have also been a weakening factor. There was a report of damage to the Argentine crop but it was not certified. This is the critical time for the Argentine crop, there being danger from frost about this season. Exports of wheat from both coasts of the United States this week, flour included as wheat, amount to 2,566,000 bushels, as compared with 2,689,000 bushels in the like week a year ago, 2,813,000 bushels in the week two years ago and 3,835,000 bushels in the first week of November, 1892. Duluth and Minneapolis stocks on November 2, aggregated 18,486,351 bushels, against 16,533,816 bushels a year ago. These two points have received on this crop 14,000,000 bushels more than on last year's crop to the same date.

In Manitoba wheat prices have again been easier, in sympathy with lower United States markets and high freight rates. Prices in Manitoba country markets declined about 1c,