

## THE RAILWAY CONTRACTS.

The Commercial will not undertake to enter into an extended discussion of the railway contracts. From present indications it is possible that by the time this reaches our readers, the bill may have passed the legislature. It is therefore, too late in the day to attempt to go into the matter in detail, with the hope of assisting in accomplishing any result thereby. We cannot, however, allow the matter to pass without again expressing the deepest regret that more time has not been given to discuss this matter. It is probably the case that not one person in each one hundred of the electors of Manitoba has had an opportunity of acquiring all the information desired on the subject. This is shown in the case of the Winnipeg board of trade, which has failed to take any action in considering the contracts. The members of the Winnipeg board of trade are probably the best informed body of men, taken all around, in proportion to numbers in Manitoba to-day, yet the board has been unable, for lack of time, to come to any decision upon the contracts. Now, we ask, if this is the case in regard to the Winnipeg board, whose members have the opportunity of obtaining information at the earliest possible moment, where does the country stand? It certainly does seem that the rural and out-lying districts of the province have hardly begun yet to discuss the matter.

In a question of such far-reaching importance, which must exert a powerful influence for good or evil on the future of Manitoba, it does seem that more time should have been given to consider the proposals. It is a matter for regret, we again repeat, that these contracts, together with all the negotiations and correspondence relating thereto, and all the correspondence and negotiations concerning any other offers or proposals, were not submitted to the people for full consideration. Six months would not have been too long a time to fully debate this matter. Nothing would have been lost by delay, while much might have been gained, and further and more advantageous proposals might have in the meantime been received.

There are many points in the contract itself as to detail and many features in connection therewith of a general nature, or of principle, which we would like to have discussed, but in view of the probable early passing of the bill, it seems useless to go into these. We can now only make a final appeal for delay.

## Manitoba Wheat Stocks.

There were 1,675,000 bushels of wheat in store at Fort William on March 4. Receipts for the week were 70,000 bushels and shipments were 62,000 bushels. A year ago stocks in store at Fort William were 1,235,000 bushels. Stocks in store at Fort William, Port Arthur, Keweenaw, Winnipeg, and interior points are estimated approximately at 5,750,000 bushels, compared with 8,500,000 bushels a year ago, 8,500,000 bushels two years ago, and 4,400,000 three years ago.

For the week ending March 7 there were 371 cars of grain inspected which graded as follows:

Wheat—1 hard, 12 2 hard, 39; 3 hard, 61; 3 northern, 0; 1 white type, 1; rejected 1; no grade, 342; condemned, 1 car.

Oats—No. 2 white, 1; no grade, 10; rejected, 0; feed, 2 cars.

Barley—None.

Flax seed—No grade 1 car.

For the corresponding week of last year there were 220 cars of grain inspected, of which 156 graded 1 hard.

During the month of February there were in all 177 cars of grain inspected, which included 815 1 hard, 72 of oats, 2 of barley and 2 of flax.

## MONTEREAL GROCERY TRADE. Special to The Commercial.

Montreal, March 9. Sugar quiet. Feeling somewhat unsettled. Barbados molasses is 1c lower at the island, at a first cost of 13c. The landing price here has dropped 4c. Business is slow. Canned goods have declined ¼ to ½c. Canned goods are active and firm. Spices fairly active. Sales of round lots of Java and Sumatra tea reported at 16 to 19½c and 1,500 half chests Ceylons at 16 to 17c.

Quail, granulated, \$4.05 per 100 lbs; yellow, \$3.80 to \$4.40; molasses, jobbing at 34 to 35c. Valencia raisins, off 11½c; to 11½c; fine, 7c; selected, 7½c; layers, 8c; currants, 8½c to 9c; canned goods, to 10c. 55 to 67½c, peas, 30 to 35c; corn, 35 to 38c; salmon, 40 to 42½c per case; Japan tea, old crop 14½ to 16½; new crop, 16 to 22c; Ceylon, 11½ to 22c for good to choice; Congou, 11 to 15c; greens, 15 to 18c.

## MONTEREAL CURED MEAT PRICES. Special to The Commercial.

Provisions—The market for provisions is quiet and steady. Quotations are as follows: Pork, \$10 to \$11; pure, 10½ to 11½c; hams, 12 to 14c; bacon, 14 to 15c.

## MONTEREAL GRAIN &amp; PRODUCE. Special to The Commercial.

Montreal, March 9. Market quiet, but feeling steady in grain. Sales of 25,000 bushels of wheat at 10½c. Round lots of oats have been offered at 25c. May for No. 1, with bids ¼c under this price. Oatmeal is active. Feed in good demand. Hay strong and active. Cheese dull, offerings being light, and not of first quality. Butter is ½c lower, prices being steady at the decline. Receipts of fresh eggs are increasing, and the market is easy at a decline of 2c per dozen. Turkeys and chickens have been in good demand. Muttons have been active. Dressed hogs declined 25c per 100 lbs. No car sales of hogs have been made recently.

Wheat—No. 1 spring wheat, 76½c for May delivery ahead.

Barley—Sales No. 2 about May at 4½c.

Oats—No. 1 oats are offering at 35c, with ¼c bid; No. 2, 33½ to 34c; alfalfa, May, and 32 to 32½c for spot car lots.

Flour—In fair demand and firm. Manitoba patent, \$4.50; Manitoba Strong Babers, \$4.30 to \$4.50; straight rollers, \$3.20 to \$3.40.

Rolled oatmeal—\$3.35 to \$3.40 per barrel, and \$1.05 to \$1.70 for bags.

Manitoba—Market firm, good demand. Manitoba, best, \$1.75, shorts, \$1.15.

Baled Hay—Choice, \$10.50 to \$11; No. 2, \$9.50 to \$10.

Cheese—½c to ¾c for such as is offering. Stocks on spot estimated at 150,000 to 180,000 boxes.

Butter—Finest creamery, 22 to 23½c; seconds, 21c; dairy, 17 to 18c; Manitoba dairy, 15 to 16½c.

Eggs—Fresh, 18 to 19c; choice cold storage stock, 13½ to 15c; culls, 10½ to 11½c; Montreal, 14 to 15c; western, 14 to 15c.

Maple Syrup—4½ to 7c in wood; time, 50 to 75c; sugar, 7 to 8c.

Honey—White clover, comb, 18½ to 19½c; buckwheat comb, 10 to 12c; extracted, 7 to 8c.

Hides—No. 1, 2c; No. 2, 6 cents; No. 3, 5 cents; calfskins, 8 and 9c; lambskins, 90c for good fresh skins.

Vegetables—Potatoes, carlots, 40 to 40½c; onions, \$3.25 to \$3.50 per barrel.

Meats—Turkeys, 8 to 10c; chickens, 8 to 10c; fowls, 4 to 6c; ducks, 7 to 8c; geese, 5 to 7c.

Groceries—Partridges, fresh, 7c a pair; seconds, 45¢ to 50¢; deer, carcases, 45¢ to 50¢ per pound.

Meats—Beef hinds, 3c to 3c; fore, 3 to 3½c; veal, 4 to 5½c; lamb, 6½ to 7c; mutton, 4½ to 5½c; dressed hogs sold in small lots in a jobbing way at 35.50 to 36.75.

## MONTEREAL LIVE STOCK MARKET. Special to The Commercial.

At the East End abattoir yesterday receipts were 360 cattle and 25 sheep and lambs.

The market for cattle was weak, prices declining fully 25c per 100 lbs. due to large supply, and also to liberal offerings of dressed beef. Choice cattle sold at 4½c to 4½c, good at 3½c to 4c, fair at 2½c to 3c, and common at 2c to 2½c per lb. The trade in sheep

and lambs was slow on account of the continued small offerings. Sheep sold at 3½c, and lambs at 4½c to 5c per lb. Live hogs were in good demand, and firm at 6½c to 7c per lb.

In local export live stock circles a feature of late has been the inquiry for ocean freight from this port for May, from some Ontario shippers, and space to Liverpool has been booked at 47s 6d per head, which is the same rate the first engagements were made at last season.

## THURSDAY'S MARKETS.

Montreal, March 8. Receipts of live stock at the East End abattoir on Thursday were 300 cattle and 50 sheep and lambs, and 20 spring lambs. The supply of cattle being smaller than usual, the tone of the market was steady, though owing to limited demand, the offerings were not all well required. Really choice butchers' cattle were as scarce as ever. There were really none of this class on the market. Trade was rather slow. A few of the best sold at 4½c, but the bulk of sales of cattle were at 3½ to 4c, fair at 2½ to 3½c, and common at 2 to 2½c per lb.

In small stock an active trade was done, there being a good demand for all lines at steady prices. Sheep sold 3½c; lambs 4½ to 5c per lb; spring 6 to 6½c each.

Receipts of live hogs were 400. The market was weak in sympathy with the decline in Toronto on Tuesday last. Sales were made at \$10.00 per 100 lbs, which is a decline of 55c per 100 lbs.

## TORONTO LIVE STOCK MARKET. Special to The Commercial.

Toronto, March 6. Receipts at the stock yards yesterday were 40 carloads, including 800 cattle, 234 sheep and lambs, and 500 hogs.

Export cattle trade was decidedly slow. The English markets have sagged and the demand is indifferent. Prices are lower on this market. Choice cattle are quoted at \$4.40 to \$4.50 per cwt. and medium at \$4 to \$4.30. Export cows sell at \$3.25 to \$3.75.

Butchers' Cattle—The supply of good cattle was small and those offered sold readily at good prices. The demand for picked lots was steady, and one small bunch of fancy cattle sold at \$4.45. The bulk of the offerings in this class however, sold at \$4 to \$4.25, and were in keen demand at these prices.

Stocks—Offerings light and trade inactive. Prices are steady and unchanged at \$2.75 to \$3.25 for animals weighing from 500 to 800 lbs.

Sheep—There was a good demand and a light run: prices advanced 1c per cwt. Export cows are worth \$3 to \$3.50 and bucks, \$2.50 to \$3.00 per cwt. Butchers' sheep are steady at \$2.50 to \$3.50 each.

Hogs—The market has weakened and prices are 3½c to 5c lower. Selects of 180 to 250 lbs, natural weight, have dropped from \$4.37½ to \$4.50 per cwt. and lights and fairs from \$4.50 to \$4. Prices are steady at the decline.

## FRIDAY'S MARKETS.

Toronto, March 9. Receipts at the semi-weekly markets yesterday were 50 cars, including 300 sheep and lambs, and 500 hogs.

Exporters are quiet. British markets better. The highest price paid was \$4.50 for best; other grades, \$4.70 to \$4.80. Offerings of butchers' cattle were large and the market open. Choice sold at 4½c, others slow. The top price paid was \$4.25. Offerings of sheep were light and prices steady. Grain fed lambs were 25c lower at \$3.75 to \$4.25. Farm yard lambs 25c lower at \$3.50 to \$3.75. Hogs steady and unchanged.

## GLASGOW CATTLE MARKET.

Special to The Commercial.

Glasgow, March 8. The trade in American cattle was more active than a week ago, and the prices realised were fully \$10 per head lower. Shippers state that \$6 is their actual loss per head as a result of the depressed market.

## LIVERPOOL CHEESE MARKET.

Special to The Commercial.

Liverpool, March 8. Cheese quoted is lower than a week ago on the outside price at 4½s to 4½s.

F. R. Stewart & Co., produce merchants, Vancouver, are closing the Nelson branch of their business.

## TORONTO WHOLESALE TRADE. Special to The Commercial.

Toronto, March 9. Dry goods—Trade has been very active this week owing to spring readiness openings, which were pronounced a success. House sales have been large and buyers are placing liberal orders in expectations of a big spring sale. Prices are generally steady.

Cottons are firm. Hardware—Trade is picking up and there is more inquiry from the west for spring. Many orders are being held for April freight reductions. Galvanized and bar wire are slightly reduced. Manufacturers of bar iron and iron pipe have withdrawn their prices. Oiled and annealed wire is being sold under a new list. Steel is flatter. Lead weak. Turpentine is weaker and may decline. Glass is active and steady.

Groceries—Quiet. Sugars steady. Canned fish in demand. Better feeling in India and Ceylon teas, which are reported higher in London and Colombo. Canned goods are quiet and weak. Tomatoes 75 to 85c; corn, 70 to 82½c; peas, 75 to 80c, according to pack.

## TORONTO GRAIN AND PRODUCE. Special to The Commercial.

Toronto, March 9. Grain deliveries have been light owing to poor roads. Liverpool cables are too low for Ontario winter wheat, which is held at 45½c. Middle freights could be worked for Antwerp but no figures are available from Portland. Flour is dull. Cattle and sheep. Receipts of dairy butter are large and the market is weak. Creamery butter is slightly easier. New laid eggs are offering more freely and are weaker. Flock eggs are also easier. Offerings of fresh killed poultry are light and there is a good demand for best fat chickens.

Flour—Manitoba Patent, \$4.25; Manitoba Babers, \$4.00 for carlots at Toronto; Ontario patent, \$2.57½ to \$2.60 per barrel for 90 cent patent. Patents, middle freights.

Wheat—Ontario winter wheat, 45½c middle freights, for red and white; Ontario spring, 48c; No. 1 hard, 49c; No. 2 hard, 46c; No. 3, 41c to 43c, grinding in transit.

Oats—No. 1 white, 28½c east. 2 white, 28c middle freights.

Barley—4c for No. 3 extra at country points west.

Millfeeds—Shorts, \$15 to \$15.50 per ton for cars west; bran, \$14 to \$14.50. Oatmeal—\$3.25 for cars of bags, and \$3.35 in wood for carlots, Toronto.

Hay—Carlots on track, 90 to \$10.50 per ton.

Eggs 17 cents for fresh, in case lots; held lots, 14 to 15c; limed, 12 to 13 cents.

Butter—Large rolls, 16 to 17c; pound rolls, 17 to 18c; low grades, 15 to 16c; creamery packages, 20 to 21c; prints, 23 to 24c.

Cheese—10½ to 11c for job lots of full cheese.

Hides—7½c for No. 1 cows; No. 1 heavy steers, 7½c; country hides, 12 under these prices; calfskins, 90c for No. 1, and 8c for No. 2; sheepskins, 90c to \$1.10 each; tallow, 15c to 16c.

Wool—Washed fleece, 15 to 16c, unwashed, 9c.

Beans—\$1.50 to \$1.80 per bushel for handpicked, job lots.

Dried Apples—3½ to 4½c for round lots; evaporated, 5½c.

Honey—10 to 10½c per pound.

Poultry—Chickens, 50c to 5½c per pair; turkeys, 11 to 12c per pound; ducks, 7½ to \$1 per pair; geese 1c to 8c per pound.

Potatoes—30 to 35c per bushel for carlots.

Seeds—Alfalfa at \$5.50 to \$6.50, according to sample, and fancy lots are quoted a trifle higher; red clover is steady at \$6.75 to \$7.75, according to sample; timothy is nominal at \$7.75 to \$2.25, all these prices being per bushel at outside points.

Walter Crone, one of the western representatives of H. A. Nelson & Son of Montreal, has gone to headquarters after a trip to the coast.

A dispatch from Toronto on March 1 said: "To-day's sessions of the legislature were made notable by the introduction of a measure by Premier Ross to set apart the sum of \$1,000,000 for the purpose of improving the highways to be designated and assumed by the county council with the cities and the local municipalities through which such roads run provided the route is such as will facilitate direct transportation of the agricultural produce of the region to a local market."