

THE BUSINESS SITUATION.

WINNIPEG, Saturday, March 18.

Business has improved a little in wholesale trade, some increase in the demand being apparent in hardware, paints, etc. March is the heavy shipping month in most lines, and wholesalers have been busy sending out spring stocks. In some branches the bulk of the spring stocks have been cleared out. It is too early yet to look for much new business. Receipts of produce continue very light, owing to cold weather and the block up condition of the country, on account of the unusual amount of snow on the ground. The weather has been decidedly cold for the time of year, and this has been favorable to the fuel trade. Collections in mercantile circles are unusually close. This has been the case since the beginning of the new year, and is attributed mainly to bad country roads, which prevent farmers from marketing produce. This has been about the worst winter on record here for snow and storms. Railway traffic has suffered severely, and country roads have been almost impassable. As an offset to the close collections since the beginning of the year, it may be recalled that payments were very good during the closing months of 1896. Bank clearings at Winnipeg this week were about 15 per cent less than for the corresponding week last year.

The failures for the past week have been 256 in the United States against 300 last year, and 61 in Canada against 60 last year.

Bradstreet's reports an expanding business in the United States this week. Prices have been fairly steady, noteworthy increases being those for tea, sugar, coffee, lard and wheat. Quotations are practically unchanged for wheat flour, pork, petroleum and print cloths, while cotton, Indian corn, shoes, leather, tobacco and rosin are higher.

At New York yesterday call money was quoted at 1 1/2 to 1 3/4 per cent, prime mercantile paper, 3 to 4 per cent, bar silver, was 56 lower than a week ago at 63 3/4c, Mexican dollars, 49 3/4c.

WINNIPEG MARKETS.

WINNIPEG, SATURDAY AFTERNOON, March 18.

(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.)

CORWOOD.—Prices have not undergone any material change. Pine is held about \$1.50 for cars on track here, cinnabar, \$1.25 per cord on track, and poplar at \$2.50 to \$2.75. Prices delivered to consumers about 10c advance on these quotations.

COAL.—The weather which has been cold for this time of year, is favorable to the fuel trade. Prices are the same. Prices here are as follows: Pennsylvania anthracite \$10.00; western anthracite, \$9.50 per ton. Souris coal \$15.00 ton; Lethbridge, \$8.50. These prices are delivered to consumers in Winnipeg. Car lots on track of Souris coal are held at \$3.85 to 8.90 per ton here, or \$1.50 per ton on cars at the mines.

RAILS.—A sharp decline is reported in iron tariffs by cable from abroad. Canada maintains the strong code that this article has developed of late. Prices for parcel lots are as follows, with liberal reductions for large orders:

Alum per pound, 8 3/4 to 4 1/2; alcohol, \$5.25 gallon; bleaching powder per pound; 6 to 8c; bluestone, barrel lots 4 1/2, less than barrels, 5 to 6c; borax 11 to 18 cents; bromide potash, 65 to 75c; camphor, 80 to 95c; camphir, bunches 90 to 1.00; carbolic acid, 40 to 65c; castor oil, 11 to 15c; chlorate potash, 25 to 30c; citric acid, 55 to 65c; copperas 3 1/2 to 4c; cocaine, per oz \$5.00 to \$5.50; cream tartar, per pound, 30 to 35c; cloves, 20 to 25c; opium salts, 3 1/2 to 4c; extract logwood, bulk, 14 to 18c; do., boxes, 18 to 20c; German quinine, 35 to 40c; glycerine, per pound, 80 to 85c; ginger, Jamaica, 30 to 35c; do., African, 20 to 25c; Howard's quinine, per ounce, 45 to 55c; iodine, \$5.50 to 6.00; insect powder, 35 to 40c; morphia sul., \$1.90 to \$2.25; Opium, \$1.50 to \$5.00; oil, olive, \$1.25 to \$1.40; oil, U. S. salad, \$1.25 to \$1.40; oil, lemon, super \$2.75 to 3.25; oil, per mint, \$4.00 to \$1.50; oil, cod liver, \$2.00 to \$4 per gallon as to brand; oxalic acid, 13 to 16c; potash iodide, \$4.25 to 4.50, Paris green, 18 to 20c lb; saltpetre, 10 to 12c; sal rochello, 30 to 35c; shellac, 45 to 50c; sulphur flowers, 3 1/2 to 5c; sulphur roll, per keg, 3 1/2 to 5c; soda bicarb, per keg of 112 pounds, \$1.00 to \$1.25; sal soda, \$2 to \$3; tartaric acid, per lb., 45 to 55c; strychnine, pure crystals \$1 to \$1.25 per oz.

FLUID BEEF, ETC.—Following are prices of the goods put up by the Johnston Fluid Beef Company of Montreal:—Johnston's Fluid Beef—No. 1, 2-oz. tins, per dozen, \$2.70; No. 2 4oz., \$4.50; No. 3, 8oz., \$7.88; No. 4, 1 lb., \$12.83; No. 5, 2 lb., \$24.30. Staminol—2oz. bottles, per dozen, \$2.55; do, 4oz, \$5.10.

FISH.—Manitoba fresh fish are still offering at very low prices, and a good many will likely be carried over in refrigerators. Winter fishing stopped some time ago, as the fishermen were not able to dispose of their fish, on account of the poor shipping demand. In the Winnipeg jobbing market, hardies have advanced 1c to 8c per lb. Jobbing prices are as follows:—Finnish haddies, 8c per lb.; whitefish, 4 to 5c; Lake Superior trout, 9c; pickerel, 3 to 4c; salmon, 12c; halibut, 12c; cod, 8c; haddock, 8c per lb; smelts, 10c; herrings, 25c per dozen; oysters, \$1.60 per gallon for standards, \$1.80 for selects, and \$2 to \$2.25 for extra selects and counts; shell oysters, \$8 per barrel; smoked salmon, 15c lb.; bloaters, \$1.10 to \$1.40 box; red herrings, 20c box; pickled trout, \$7.50 per barrel of 100 lb.; pickled whitefish, \$6 per barrel; salt herrings \$3.50 per half barrel; boneless fish, 5c lb.

GREEN FRUITS.—Choice apples are somewhat scarce but there is considerable common stock, which sells at \$2 to \$2.50 per barrel. Good stock brings full prices. The frequent delays on the railways makes it very difficult to handle perishable stock, such as bananas to any advantage. Fruit has been a week on the road between here and St. Paul. Malaga grapes are very scarce here just now. Prices are as follows: Apples, spiced, \$1.75 to \$1, other fruit to good stock, \$3.00 to \$3.50 per barrel as to quality. California navel, \$1.50 to \$1.75 per box; California seedling oranges \$3.75 to \$1.00 per box; Messina lemons, \$1.50 per box; California lemons, \$1.50 to \$3 box; Cape Cod cranberries, frozen, \$5 to \$5.50 per barrel; Malaga grapes, \$9.50 per keg; bananas, \$2.75 to \$3.50 per bunch; pineapples \$1 per dozen; sweet potatoes, \$1 to \$1.50 per barrel; dates, 6 1/2 to 7c lb.; figs, 13 to 15c lb. for layers.

NUTS.—Tarragon almonds, 16c; Sicily filberts, large, 15c. filberts ordinary, 12c. peanuts, roasted, 12c; peanuts, green, 9c. Ontario butterhuts 9c; Ontario Walnuts 6c; hickory nuts, 10; Grenoble walnuts, 15c; French walnuts, 12c lb.

HARDWARE—Prices here are:

TIN, lamb and 56 and 28 lb. ingots, per lb. 19 to 20c.

TIN PLATES.—Charcoal plates, I. C., 10 by 11, 12 by 12 and 11 by 20, per box, \$1.50 to \$1.75; I. X., same size, per box, \$5.75 to \$6; I. C., charcoal, 20 by 28, 112 sheets to box, \$9.00 to 9.25; I. X., per box, 20 by 28, 112 sheets to box, \$11.00 to 11.20.

TERNE PLATES.—I. C., 20 by 28, \$9.00 to 9.25.

IRON AND STEEL.—Bar iron, per 100 lbs. base price, \$2.35 to \$2.50; band iron, per 100 lbs., \$2.35 to 3.00, Swedish iron, per 100 lbs.; \$5.25 to 6, sloop shoe steel, \$3.00 to 3.25; best cast tool steel, per lb, 9 to 11c; Russian sheet, per lb. 12 to 13c.

SHEET IRON.—10 to 20 gauge, \$3.00; 22 to 24 and 26 gauge, \$3.25, 28 gauge, \$3.50.

CANADA PLATES.—Garth and Blaina, \$3.15

GALVANIZED IRON.—American, 20 gauge, \$1.00, 22 and 24 gauge, \$1.25, 26 gauge \$1.50; 28 gauge, \$1.75 per 100 lbs.

IRON PIPE.—50 to per 60 cent. off list.

LEAD.—Fig, per lb., 4 1/2c.

SHEET ZINC.—In casks, 5.75 lb., broken lots, 6.00.

SOLDER.—Half and half (guar) per lb, 14 to 16c.

AMMUNITION.—Cartridges—Rim fire pistol, American, discount, 40 per cent.; rim fire cartridges, Dominion, 50 and 5; rim fire military, American, not list; central fire pistol and rifle, American, 12 per cent.; central fire cartridge, Dominion, 30 per cent.; shot shells, 12 gauge, \$6 to 7.50; shot, Canadian, soft, 5 1/2c; shot, Canadian, chilled, 6c.

WIRE.—Galvanized barb wire, plain twisted wire and staples, \$3.10 per 100 lbs.

ROPE.—Sisal, per lb. 7 1/2 to 8c base; manilla, per lb., 9 1/2 to 10 1/2c base; cotton, 1/2 to 1 inch at 1 larger, 15c lb.

AXES.—Per box, \$6.00 to 9.00.

NAILS.—Cut, per keg, base price, \$2.63 for 60 d. with usual extras; common steel wire nails, 3 to 6 inch, \$3.20 per keg, 2 1/2 inch, \$3.33, with usual extras for smaller sizes.

HORSE NAILS.—Pointed and finished, oval heads. Last prices as follows: No. 5, \$7.50 box; No. 6, \$6.75 box; No. 7, \$6 box; No. 8, \$5.75 box; No. 9, 10 and 11, \$5.50 box. Discount off above list prices, 45 per cent.

PAINTS, OILS, ETC.—Prices are as follows:

WHITE LEAD.—Pure, \$5.75 per 100 lbs.

PREPARED PAINTS.—Pure liquid colors per gallon, \$1.15 to \$1.25.

DRY COLORS.—White lead, per lb., 7c; red lead, kegs 5 1/2c; yellow ochre in barrel lots, 2 1/2c; less than barrels, 3c; golden ochre, barrels, 3 1/2c; less than barrels 4c; Venetian, red, barrels, 3c; less than barrels, 3 1/2c. American vermilion, 15c; English vermilion, \$1 per lb., Paris green, 15 to 19c; Canadian metallic oxides, barrel lots 2 1/2c; less than barrel lots, 3c; English purple oxides, 100 lb. kegs, 4c; less than kegs, 4 1/2c lb.

VARNISHES.—No. 1 furniture, per gal., \$1; extra furniture, \$1.35; pale oak, \$1.50; elastic oak, \$1.50 to \$1.75; No. 1 carriage, \$1.50 to \$1.75; hard oil finish, 1.50 to \$2, brown Japan, \$1; goldsize Japan, \$1.50, No. 1, orange shellac, \$2; pure orange shellac, \$2.50.

SUNDRIES.—Glue, S.S., in sheets, per lb., 12 1/2 to 15c; glue, white, for kalsomining, 15 to 18c. Stove gasoline, per case, \$1.00; benzine, per case, \$1.00; benzine and gasoline,