WINNIPEG MARKETS.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON, Feb. 20.

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

Continued dullness in the grain trade made the week somewhat quiet. The grain movement in the direction of farmers' deliveries at country markets, is exceedingly light, which may to some extent be accounted for by considerable cold, rough weather, and to a tendency on the part of farmers to hold for higher prices. There was a little firmer feeling in wheat locally, and the tendency in prices was higher, in sympathy with leading markets, flour partaking of the strength and advanced 5c. Barley continues very flat. Oats are low in price, but were a trifle firmer locally, with comparatively higher prices for good milling qualities. There were very light offerings of produce of all kinds on the Winnipeg street market, which made a firmer tendency, and led to an advance in street prices for oats. Dressed meats and poultry of all kinds are in unusually light supply for this time of the year, and prices are firmer all around. Cured meats are stiff, and advancing fast. In wholesale branches reports generally indicated a fair trade doing for the season.

DRIED FRUITS—Dried apples, 6 to 6½c; evaporated, 8½ to 9c; figs, layers, 12 to 18c; figs, cooking, 5 to 7c; dates, 6 to 8c. Valencia raisins, $1.90 to $2.00. Currants, 6½ to 7½c; prunes, 6½ to 10c. Evaporated fruits are quoted: apricots, 11½ to 12c; peeled peaches, 17½ to 18c; unpeeled peaches, 12 to 13c; pitted plums, 11 to 11½c; cherries, 13 to 13½c; pears, 12½ to 13c; nectarines, 11½ to 12c; raspberries, 19 to 19½c.

DRUGS—The feature of this branch is the large demand for bluestone, which is quite unprecedented in any previous season. A larger number of dealers than usual are handling this commodity, and prices are 1 to 2c per pound lower than last year. Prices have gradually declined, and now orders are booked freely at 5½c, and some large orders have been filled at 5 to 5½c. See quotations on inside back cover.

GREEN FRUITS.—Business good for the season, especially considering the cold weather. Apples have again advanced 25c per barrel for good to fancy stock. California and Florida oranges are in good supply, but difficult to move on account of the severe weather. Prices are: California fruits—Winter pears, 40 lb. boxes, $3.50 to $4; Navel oranges, $4 to $4.50 per box; Riverside seedlings $3.50 per box; Ontario barrel apples, $3 to $3.25. Lemons—New Messina, $6.75 to $7 per box; bananas, $4 to $5 per bunch. Florida oranges, $4 to $4.50 per box. Cranberries, $10 per barrel. Malaga grapes, $7.50 to $10 per keg, as to size of keg.

GROCERIES—Locally there is not much of interest to note in this branch. The news which reached here on Monday, of the breaking up of the sugar agreement in the east, was not unexpected, and was foreshadowed in THE COMMERCIAL of the previous week. A number of firms were breaking the agreement, and it was evident, therefore that it could not go on long that way. Sugar will now again be handled in the east far the glory of the thing, no doubt, and without a profit, as the agreement has been thrown up. An eastern paper relates the following as one of the ways in which the agreement was broken: "One of the most recent plans adopted by some of the travellers to evade the sugar agreement was reported to-day. A traveller calls on a retailer and offers to bet $5 that the latter dare not buy 15 barrels of sugar. The retailer figures it that he can by taking the bet get his sugar at a reduced price and he takes. In other words the retailer buys 15 barrels at 4⅞c and gets $5 back." It is understood Montreal and Quebec jobbers will hold to the agreement to sell sugar at ⅜ and ½c advance on cost, while Ontario jobbers are released from the agreement, and prices have been cut to 4½c on granulated, by Ontario wholesalers. This price is practically cost to them. It is said that even single barrels have been sold at 4½c, which is a cut of ⅛c under the agreement price. The eastern starch companies are also engaged in a war of cutting prices, since the recent withdrawal of the Brantford company from the agreement to maintain prices. Domestic canned goods have a firmer tendency east, and stocks are said to be getting into fewer hands.

HARDWARE—Rope is very strong east, and an advance is considered possible here. Wire nails are among the articles which may be advanced in price, as the local prices have not been changed since previous to the advance made by manufacturers in the wire nail list. The quotation given is an outside figure, as orders are being taken at 10c less. Barb wire is in demand. The price has been fixed at $5.10 to $5.20. See further quotations on inside back cover. Regarding the situation in the United States, *Bradstreets'* says: "Structural iron prices are demoralized, steel rails are only nominally $30 per ton at the mill. The demand for iron and steel is more and more of a hand to mouth character. Stocks of pig iron are increasing and finally a break has come, with sales of 4,000 tons of No. 2 x, Allentown Perth Amboy delivery at $14.50 and 2,000 tons of another Lehigh Valley furnace offered at the same figure. Southern irons have been hawked at prices supposed to represent cost."

PAINTS AND OILS—Business is good for the season, and spring orders appear to be coming in earlier than usual. Linseed oil is 3c lower. Turpentine has declined 2 to 3c. There has been a sharp decline in certain branches of lubricating oils, Standard Oil Co.'s goods, but the drop is not considered as likely to hold out long, as it is said to be due to influences outside of the real value of the commodities. See quotations inside back cover.

GRAIN AND PRODUCE.

GENERAL WHEAT—Wheat was irregular, with some very strong days, but also some soft spots during the week. On Monday prices were fairly strong in U. S. markets. Chicago advancing about 1½c and Duluth 1c, on closing prices. The strength was due to export buying and stronger cables. The export clearances from the United States for the past seven months have aggregated 147,000,000 bushels, against 55,600,000 bushels the corresponding seven months last season. These figures, when announced, were a strong feature. Liverpool cabled ½ to 1d higher. London 3d higher. Continental markets were mostly 1 to 2c higher, Paris leading. The visible supply, United States and Canada, east of the mountains, showed a decrease of 1,359,000 bushels, making the total visible 41,801,436, as compared with 22,910,591 a year ago. Duluth showed an increase for the week of 446,000 bushels. New York, St. Louis and Detroit showed the heaviest decreases in visible stocks. Receipts at Duluth were 219 cars, and at Minneapolis, 473 cars. On Tuesday United States markets were lower, losing most of the gain of Monday. Liverpool cables were encouraging to bulls, quoting ½ to 2d higher, London 3d higher, and continental markets all higher. The decline in United States markets was largely due to heavy realizing sales. Wheat and flour on ocean passage showed a decrease for the week of 800,000 bushels, as per statement on Tuesday. An increase of 133,000 acres in the area sown to wheat in Ohio, was reported. Duluth receipts were 78 cars, and Minneapolis 232, or about 70 cars more than these two points received the same day a year ago. On Wednesday United States markets fully recovered the loss of Tuesday, and some went a point or two better, though the feeling was somewhat irregular and uncertain. Liverpool was quoted ½ to ½d higher. London quoted cargoes 6d higher, but later cabled 4d lower. Continental markets were irregular, but mostly lower. There was a rumor that Russia would rescind the act preventing the export of wheat. The advance towards the close of the day in United States markets was attributed to buying by "shorts," and liberal exports, which latter aggregated 774,000 bushels, including 463,000 bushels in flour. Duluth receipts were 101 cars, and at Minneapolis were 195 cars, a total of 296 cars, as compared with 165 cars the corresponding day a year ago. On Thursday there was one of the sharpest advances which United States markets have experienced for some time. Duluth closed over 2c higher, New York 2c higher, and Chicago 2½c higher. British and European cables were higher, and there was fear of a cold wave affecting winter wheat. The cause of excitement in United States markets, however, appeared to be mainly due to rumors that a strong combination of Standard Oil men had been formed to buy wheat. These rumors centred at Chicago, where the excitement was the greatest, but the next morning the whole thing was declared a fake. On Friday United States markets were irregular and opened weak and lower. Fluctuations were rapid and the markets closed ¾ to 1c lower. The market was influenced by speculative features. British cables were strong. London cabling 6d higher per quarter. Exports of wheat from United States ports for the week ending Feb. 17th, were equal to 4,042,000 bushels, against 3,641,000 bushels the week before, 2,036,000 in the week a year ago and 2,236,000 bushels in a similar period two years ago. Indian corn exports continue phenominally heavy, 3,264,000 bushels as compared with 2,927,000 bushels a week ago and as contrasted with only 327,000 bushels in the like week a year ago.

Sales of wheat from the crop of 1891 in Minnesota and North and South Dakota have reached 114,000,000 bushels or nearly 15,000,000 bushels more than the total crop of 1890. The Minneapolis *Market Record* says that farmers in the three states named yet hold 50,000,000 bushels, 20,000,000 of which is unthreshed in the northern portion. The 50,000,000 bushels includes seed and bread for the balance of the crop year, and does not represent a marketable surplus. A considerable portion of the unthreshed portion, however, is liable to turn out damp and musty in the spring, and unfit for the market.

LOCAL WHEAT SITUATION.—Anothery very dull week has been experienced in wheat. Farmers' deliveries in Manitoba have been down to a very low ebb, and some are beginning to believe that the crop has been over-estimated. Be this as it may, the movement since the first of the year has not been up to expectations by a long ways. The old reasons for the slow movement may again be repeated, namely; farmers holding for higher prices, the large quantity of wheat unthreshed, and cold, rough weather. The week was another cold one, with considerable stormy weather, and not favorable to marketing grain. The movement is so light that elevators have been closed up at some points, as it made the little wheat taken in cost too much. One buyer was heard to say that it had cost him equal to 20 cents a bushel to buy wheat at some points the last couple of weeks, on account of the small quantity taken in, as it costs about as much to keep buyers on the market and elevators open for a few loads, as it does to take in a few thousand bushels per day. At some western points on the main line of the Canadian Pacific there was more doing. At Regina, for instance, there was considerable wheat marketed, and the quality was good, a large portion grading No. 1 and No. 2 hard, though there as at other points, there is considerable wheat which grades rejected on account of smut, which otherwise would be good quality. The stronger tendency in United States markets had some influence upon the local situa-