

THE BUSINESS SITUATION

Saturday, Nov. 11, 1899.

Continued fine weather has characterized the greater part of this week and has enabled farmers, builders, and all who had outside work to do which depended upon the weather to get in several more days which means that the finishing touches have been given to much of the work. With but few exceptions the new buildings in course of construction in Winnipeg are now closed in from the weather. On Thursday night the first visible token of winter arrived in the shape of a fall of snow. Mercantile trade may now be expected to revive very much, the fine weather having retarded the demand to some extent, and an active winter trade will be done. It is worth noticing that there has been a remarkable freedom from business disasters this fall, due no doubt to the improved times. As predicted last week the monthly customs and inland revenue returns for the port of Winnipeg—published elsewhere in this issue—show a satisfactory increase. Bank clearings continue to expand. The banks report their funds exceptionally well employed and available funds have never been more closely absorbed than at present. Interest rates are firm and tending higher. Banks are asking 7 per cent for current loans.

WINNIPEG MARKETS

Saturday, Nov. 11, 1899.

(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.)

CURED MEATS.

Very little change to note. Hams have declined 1-2c to 1c per pound. Other prices same as a week ago. See page 309.

DRUGS.

As a result of sharp advances in other markets cocaine advanced this week \$1.50 and \$2.00 per ounce a very unusual performance but one that is fully justified by the position of the market elsewhere. Quinine is easier and the price is 5c lower. Other lines are unchanged. Jobbing houses are busy and the outlook for trade is bright.

DRY GOODS.

There has been a very strong tendency in the dry goods market recently, and every day brings intelligence of further advances in prices, both on domestic and imported goods. All imported goods are costing higher and are very firm. Domestic cottons have been moving upward for some time, and now the strength is extending in a more marked degree to woollens. The advance in silks has been previously noted from time to time. In woolsens the most marked strength is in goods made from fine imported wools, in home manufactures, and such goods show a very strong upward tendency. Lines from domestic wools are not as strong as fine goods, but nevertheless the tendency is now up-

ward. All the Canadian mills are very busy, being filled with orders for many months ahead. One local house had a repeat order for underwear refused by the mill, as it could not be filled before February, which is of course too late for this season's trade. This difficulty in securing prompt delivery of goods applies to both the domestic and foreign trade, manufacturers everywhere appearing to be very busy. Representatives here of eastern houses have received numerous directions to advance prices. One local manufacturer's agent, who handles quite a wide range of goods, says that every line he handles has been advanced. In fact prices are subject to daily advance. The strong upward movement so noticeable in some other branches of trade early in the season, now seems to be setting in with renewed energy in the dry goods trade. In fancy dry goods lines and sundries there are numerous advances. This is particularly noticeable in articles having metal attachments, such as purses, parasols, trinkets, etc. Business of a sorting nature has been quiet for the season, owing to the mild weather, which has retarded the development of the usual fall demand for cold weather lines. So much so has this been the case that some travellers have taken out spring samples.

FUEL.

Coal quotations remain unchanged. The situation at producing centres is still very strong. Wood is somewhat scarce and likely to be higher as the late fall and absence of sleighing has prevented dealers from securing fresh stocks. There is no quantity of tamarac to be had at present and other kinds of Manitoba wood are equally scarce. The scarcity of cars is helping to retard deliveries. The best wood in the city now comes from the Taupin country. Coal prices will be found on page 309. Wood prices for carlots on track Winnipeg are as follows: Tamarac per cord, \$4.75; green cut tamarac, \$1.25 to \$1.50; jackpine per cord, \$4 to \$4.15; birch, \$4.75 to \$5; United States oak, \$5; Manitoba oak, \$4.75; United States maple, \$1.25; poplar, \$3 to \$3.15; spruce, \$3.25 to \$3.50; slabs, \$2.85 per cord.

FURNITURE.

Business is good in this branch. The local dealers have had a large trade this season and are still receiving many orders. Owing to the big business which the eastern factories have enjoyed this year, local dealers have experienced difficulty in getting their orders filled promptly, and in some cases it has been hard to keep stocks up to requirements. Prices in furniture have been strong, the general tendency to advance prices being quite as marked in this branch as in several other lines. All hardwood furniture has been advanced this season, ranging 10 to 15 per cent advance, the upward tendency being more marked on common lines. This is owing to the advance of about \$5 per thousand feet on hardwood lumber. The strongest line in the furniture trade is iron bedsteads. There have been two advances of 10 per cent each this season, and it is said that another 10 per cent advance will be made about January 1.

GREEN FRUIT.

The trade in apples is the most important feature of the fruit market at present. It is apparent that the supply of winter apples ordered for this market is very large and probably more than it can comfortably

absorb. Receipts of fall apples were certainly too large and sales of surplus stocks have been made this week by auction. Very good prices were realized. Prices are now as follows: California naval oranges, \$5 to \$5.50; do., seedlings, \$1.25 to \$1.75; Mexican oranges, \$5.00; lemons, new Californias, per box, \$5.00 to \$5.50; bananas, per bunch, \$2.25; apples, winter, \$3.50 per barrel; fall apples, \$2.75 to \$3.25; snow apples, fancy, \$1.00 per barrel; quinces, per basket of 20 lbs., 75c; Ontario grapes, 30 to 40c per basket; California grapes, per crate, \$2.25; Malaga grapes, in kegs, per keg, \$7.50; cranberries per barrel, \$7.25; coconuts, per dozen, 50c; Grenada walnuts, 15c; Tarragona almonds, 15c; peanuts, green, 9 to 10c; roasted, 12c; pecan nuts, 13c per lb.; chestnuts, 15c; hickory nuts, 10c per lb.; maple sugar, per lb., 11c; apple cider, 35c per gallon in barrels and half barrels; fruit cider put up in 20 and 30 gallon kegs, per gallon, 40c; figs, in boxes, 7c lb.; new California layer figs in 10 lb. boxes, \$1.60 to \$1.75; Smyrnas, \$1.50; dates, 7c per lb.; sweet potatoes, per barrel, \$5; honey, in 1 lb. glass jars, per dozen jars, \$2.50; Spanish onions, \$1.25 per crate; American red onions, 2c per lb.

GROCERIES.

The jobbing trade is active and prices are mostly firm and tending upwards. Sugar is the only weak line. Our eastern advices show a further decline of 10c on all Canadian refined sugars on Tuesday. Canned vegetables are still firmer in the east, although this market shows no further advances yet. Corn is being held in first hands at from \$1 to \$1.10 per dozen. Most of the packers have come to offer. Bowley's new peaches and pears are expected this week and will show a substantial advance in price over last year's figures. Higher prices of tin, solder and other materials that enter into the canning process and also higher prices of poultry have led to higher prices for tinned, boneless chicken, turkey and duck. The new pack of these is fully 10 per cent higher in price. Japan rice has taken a jump of nearly 1-2c per pound and is now quoted at 4-3-1c to 5c. Fine off-stalk, Valencia raisins are now in stock. They have been very slow in coming forward. The car and vessel shortage has had to do with this. In fact the grocers have had quite as much difficulty as any other class of traders in getting delivery of their goods. In consequence the effect of the lower rates at which the later shipments are usually brought in has not been felt yet. The market for Valencia raisins is very firm and from present indications there will be no low prices this season. New California muscels have arrived. They are not showing as good quality as usual; quoted at 8c for 2 crown, \$1-2c for 3 crown and 9c for 4 crown. Pitted plums this season show a marked advance and are now being quoted at 10 1-2c per pound. Apricots are 1-2c higher.

HARDWARE.

Local quotations show an advance of 10c per 100 pounds on bar and band iron. Pig lead is also higher. Auger bits have advanced, the discount now on American being 50 per cent instead of 60 to 65. Bolts are higher as will be seen from our price list on page 311. Bronze and bronzed butts are also higher. Other prices remain as before. Heavy consignments have been arriving from the east in view of the approach of the close of naviga-