

### TOO MANY TAVERNS.

A year ago when speculative excitement centered such a large floating population in Winnipeg, any house that could be dubbed "hotel" or secure a license for the conducting of such a business, was to its occupant, for the time being, a small "El Dorado." Visitors were glad to secure shelter in any kind of a house, and to pay liberally for the same. As a natural consequence, there was a general rush into the business of tavern-keeping, and how many of these dives which have since been allowed to exist, ever secured license for the accommodation of travellers, is a mystery to sensible people. It is safe to state that at least one-third of the licensed hotels in this city are totally unfit for such uses, and at least one-half of that proportion lodge, on the average, less than one traveller a night in the month. The sale of liquors is the department from which any profit is expected, and these hovels styling themselves hotels, are the lowest kind of swill-dens; now that the travelling public can find accommodation in more commodious and recently constructed houses.

But this unnecessary number of so-called taverns has had a very bad effect on the trade interests of Winnipeg. During the boom of last winter, any rent could be secured for a place on Main Street, where a license to sell liquor was attached. And men in legitimate business who were unable to pay the ruinous rents offered by these irresponsible and unscrupulous maniacs, were compelled to make room for a whiskey-mill. If the premises were too small to secure a license, a real estate office was the next resort to secure an unreasonable rental. The consequence was that rents of business places in the centre of the city, went up to figures unequalled in the largest cities of the Dominion, and legitimate trade interests of the city were loaded with a burden placed upon them by the folly of the irresponsible and speculative classes.

Every strained state of affairs, such as above described, must have a reaction, and this has set in in connection with the tavern mania. The real estate office craze collapsed quite suddenly, and is now a thing of the past, and more than one property owner, who turned out a steady tenant to make room for such an institution, is mourning the absence of some mushroom mud-monger, from whom he expected still to be receiving ruinously high

rent. The taverns are showing a similar result, and the number of those which have been sold out by the landlord, or closed up by some disappointed creditor during the past three months, is nearly equal to all the insolvencies in other branches of business. The misfortune has been, however, that the unscrupulous landlord has, in almost every case, secured the lion's share of what assets were left, and in most cases the stock of fortyrod, broken crystal and rickety furniture has been sufficient to make him financially safe, while other creditors have had to suffer. The evil is gradually rectifying itself, but the reaction may be an extreme one, and should rents fall, so as to place property-owners at a loss, they could not expect to receive much sympathy from the commercial circles of the city, on whom many of them have subsisted as insatiate parasites.

### Winnipeg Wholesale Trade.

There has been a decided quietness in the wholesale trade of the city generally, and some branches have been actually dull. There are others, however, in which a livening up feeling has been apparent for several days. There has been no depression felt, and considerable of a hopefulness is general. A very large proportion of houses have been ballancing up for year, and the report for 1882 has been a very encouraging one so far. As this month is, off all others between the seasons, the volume of trade doing is small, but there is some activity, and a general preparation is being made for a rushing opening trade.

#### AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY, CARRIAGES, ETC.

The sales of goods in this branch, for the past week do not figure very high, and even the trade in cutters and sleighs has greatly fallen off. There is great activity in sending spring supplies to country agents and dealers, and receiving supplies from the factories to meet further demands. Up to date the different wholesale houses of the city have received over forty cars of goods for the spring trade, and at least fifty more are now in transit from the east. One house have already received eleven cars, while they have as many more on their way from the factories. There have been calculations of a heavy spring trade being done during 1883.

#### BOOTS AND SHOES.

Business in this line has been very quiet during the week, and wholesale houses have more or less of a neglected appearance. Even the extreme cold weather of the past week did not revive any demand for winter goods, and the trade in spring goods has not yet commenced, although a few orders from samples have been taken. Within ten days travellers will be starting out, and until then no marked improvement in trade is looked for. Collections have been reasonably good during the week, and the

trade generally is in a hopeful state, notwithstanding the present dullness.

#### CLOTHING.

There has been no improvement in this branch of business during the past week, and a general quietness reigns throughout the trade. The inquiry for winter sorts which continued up to ten days ago, has now subsided, and even the town trade is almost at a stand still. Heavy consignments of spring stock have reached the city during the week, and houses have been busy with these. Travellers have started out with spring samples during the the past few days, and returns are expected from them during the current week. As in numerous other lines, ballancing for the year has been finished up, and shows well for 1882. There are high hopes of an early opening of a good spring's business.

#### CROCKERY AND GLASSWARE.

The business in these goods during the week has been very small, and a decided dullness is general in the trade. Some orders from the country have been dropping in, but they have been for the most staple classes of goods, and have been only sorts and limited in quantity. The city trade is also quiet, but steady, and keeps matters from monotony. There is very little stir expected during the present month, and houses seem reconciled to this fact.

#### DRY GOODS.

A steady quietness has been general in this trade for the week, more so in fact, than since the commencement of the winter business. The receiving of spring stock has been the only thing that has prevented actual dullness, as both city and country orders have been few and light. There has been no great effort made during the week at selling from spring samples, and the trade in these goods has not fairly opened up, and probably will not during the present month. Collections are reported only fair, and some houses express a little disappointment at their slowness. There are no travellers out at present, but a general exodus will take place during the current week, and the week following will probably open the pushing of spring trade.

#### DRUGS AND CHEMICALS.

The report of the week from this branch of business is fair to good, although a slightly quiet feeling is general. Travellers are now out, and their returns are very encouraging, considering this is the dull season. The city trade is rather slow, and it is in this department that the quiet feeling is most observable. Collections are reported reasonably good, and a confident feeling is general. The trade may be said to be in a really healthy condition.

#### FANCY GOODS AND SMALLWARES.

The report from this line is one of slowly returning activity. Up to the middle of the week a steady dullness was general, but during its closing days business picked up considerably, and one house had to report three new accounts from the country. A long lull was expected by the trade after the holidays, but from the brisk feeling which has sprung up in the last few days, it is expected that this will be of much shorter duration than was anticipated. The figures of