

without inducing a general unloading. The advices from different points do not suggest that the "Keene" party has been selling at all, and it is generally believed that the bull movement is yet untamed by the course of prices. The following are the prices in the Chicago market for February delivery at the close of business daily since last report: Friday, \$1.24½; Saturday, \$1.24½; Monday, \$1.23½; Tuesday, \$1.23½; Wednesday, \$1.20½; and to-day at 1.04 p. m. \$1.20½. In coarse grains the only business reported is the sale of a few Pease at 80c. Quotations are nominal at: Corn, 68c to 70c in bond; Barley, 60c to 70c; Oats, 31c to 32c; Rye, 80c to 82c; Pease about 80c. The flour market is quite sluggish; a few sales of Strong Bakers' are reported at \$5.50 and Spring Extra at \$5.92½, \$6.00 and \$6.10; but the lots were very small. We quote Superior Extra, \$6.20 to \$6.25; Extra Superior, \$6.10 to \$6.15; Strong Bakers', \$6.20 to \$6.45; Spring Extra, \$5.90 to \$6.10; Superfine, \$5.60 to \$5.70; Fine, \$5.15 to \$5.20; Middlings, \$4.40; Ontario bags, \$2.90 to \$3.00; City bags, \$3.20 to \$3.25; Buckwheat, \$4.25; Oatmeal, \$4.70 to \$4.75; Cornmeal, \$2.90 to \$3.00.

FRUITS.—There is very little to report in this market, its condition being much the same as advised last week. There is virtually no local sale for apples, and stocks are continuing their compulsory flight across the Atlantic on consignment, and kindred shipments make up about the sum of the activity of the trade. Oranges are cheaper, and must not be now quoted better than \$6. This fruit, which has also been over plentiful, finds its outlet in the west, Chicago having timely relieved our market of the burden of some 1,300 cases. Nothing doing in other fruits. Advices from abroad are of a fairly steady market for apples, and the prospects for outgoing shipments are considered reasonably good.

FURS.—London sales now in progress, and prices are not altered from present quotations. Beaver and Opossum from all indications are likely to be higher.

GROCERIES.—*Sugars.*—Granulated has lost the late advance of ½c. steady, as also Yellows, 8½c to 9½c. Raw Sugars, quiet. Cable reports refined rather easier in Britain. *Teas.*—For desirable low sweet Japan market is steady. Green Teas held firmly in New York. Black Teas also firm in England and again rather higher. *Molasses.*—Not much doing, but fairly steady. Syrups, reported advance in United States about ½c. *Rice and Coffee.*—unchanged. *Spices.*—Pepper quite firm and rather higher, 10½c to 11½c. Cloves are just reported as firmer. Other Spices unchanged. *Fruits.*—Valencia Raisins, 7½c to 8½c. Layers and other Malaga Fruits are active but not quotably changed. Almonds firm. Tarragona, 18½c to 20c. Currants keep up ½c to 8½c.

HARDWARE.—The features of this market are unchanged; that is, prices are again up. Strength and activity are the order of the day, and a cheerful, buoyant feeling pervades the very atmosphere of the trade. Houses that last year were glad enough to book orders at this time for spring delivery at ruinous or, more guardedly, distressing prices, are now quite independent of any such anxious methods of selling their wares, and even at the full advances quoted refuse to book, save for immediate delivery; or, if holding the goods until the opening of navigation, dating payment from time of booking the order. Whatever may be said of other lines of business, the country hardware trade seems now to be awakening to a full realization of the situation. Inquiries for goods for spring delivery are already coming in freely, and such is the eagerness to secure stocks at present figures that we hear of instances of cash remittances in full, with instructions to hold the goods until they can be shipped at spring freight rates, while not infrequently orders come in accompanied by a cash payment on account, a sort of margin to secure the con-

tract. In past seasons, says the wholesaler, sales made early in the year were measurably subject to the later developments of the market, since, if prices declined, as was their wont, some misunderstanding would arise or some hitch occur by which the transaction would be rendered abortive. Now the tables are turned, all this uncertainty is removed; and that in the very effective way indicated by the new methods alluded to. We do not permit ourselves to doubt that under reversed conditions the retailer might indict an equally true bill against the wholesalers, and the only inference permissible to draw from the reference is that there is always an indefinite percentage of business which cannot be depended upon under a system of long contracts. Advices from abroad are unchanged in tenor; no qualification of previously reported firmness, no abatement of co-incidental excitement. The following circumstance illustrates the extent and character of the change that as taken place in Canada plates: On the 4th of December a leading house received a cablegram offering a certain quality of plates at 14s, the same plates having brought early in the season but 9s. On the 20th inst., an interval of less than seven weeks, a cablegram is received offering plates hardly so good at 19s., an advance, without allowance for difference in quality, of over 35 per cent. We have again to make extensive alterations in our prices for rent advancing iron and tin plates as follows:—Black Tin, 28c to 30c; Grain Tin, 28c to 30c; Galvanized Iron, No. 28, 9c to 9½c; Pig Iron, Siemens, No. 1, \$32 to \$34; Siemens bar iron, \$2.40 to \$2.60; do best, \$2.90 to \$3.10; Langloan Pig Iron, \$3.4 to \$3.5; Ellington, No. 1, \$33 to \$34; Bar Iron, ordinary brands, \$2.50 to \$2.75; Sheet Iron to No. 20, \$3.25 to \$3.50; Swedes, \$4.00 to \$5.00; Hoops, \$3.00 to \$3.25; Boiler Plates, \$3.25 to \$3.50; Canada Plates, Hatton, \$4.50 to \$5.00; Iron Wire, No. 6, per bundle, \$2.25; No. 9, \$2.55; No. 12, \$2.85; No. 16, \$3.10; Tin Plate, 1 C. Coke, \$9.00; 1 C. Charcoal, \$10; 1 X., \$12; 1 X. X., \$14; D. C., \$9; D. X., \$11; D. X. X., \$13; Pig lead, \$5.50 to \$5.75; Sheet, \$6 to \$6.50; Shot, \$6.50 to \$7.00.

HIDES.—The easier feeling in the West is reflected in this market, though not to an extent to affect prices. Regular dealers maintain that \$10 is now a full price, and, while everything offering is quickly picked up on that basis, there is no longer that sharp competition which a short time ago induced the cutting of brokers' or handlers' profits. A prominent leather dealer claims, however, that purchases are still making quietly as high as \$10.50, and that butchers who do not look for accommodation at the hands of their customers can get this figure without difficulty. In any case the price to tanners remains unchanged at \$11, \$10 and \$9 for green butchers' Nos. 1, 2 and 3 respectively, at which rates the market is kept bare. Sheepskins unchanged.

HORS.—The distrust to which reference was made last week as rather impending than actual is no longer discernible, and has very likely disappeared entirely. It takes but little to change the character of the local market, and this perhaps for the reason that the market has so little character to change. The sale of 9 bales on private terms is reported. This is taken as the forerunner of the demand for consumption that was beginning to excite anxious interest on account of its non-appearance, and, consequently, a less uneasy feeling obtains. It is not expected that the buyers will come at once into the market and supply their needs for the season, for they profess to have no confidence in prices, and prove their sincerity by persistently withholding from the market; but it is thought that the time is about come when from necessity small purchases at least will be made, and these continue on steadily. The purchase cited was of a character to bear this interpretation, and is doubtless the true motive of any change that may be deemed to have taken place. We are informed of a lot of 6 bales, very good hops, seeking a purchaser, not below 33c,

and another lot of 10 bales, choice, for which 33c might have been had some fortnight ago, now asking for a bid. If consumers come into the market, as seems now probable, the figure above named may prove not out of the way, but at present we know of no bids, and no transactions pointing to so high a price. The quotation for choice New York hops in that market on Wednesday was 38c to 40c; and for good to prime, 35c to 37c.

LEATHER.—Sole leather is in very active demand, and moves off rapidly. A leading house reports it difficult to keep any in stock, as everything that comes in goes out almost immediately, and were it not for adopting this year a policy of unusually strict discrimination in the matter of making sales, its business might be very largely extended. That is, inquiry is so eager that established houses are in a position to reject custom not of the highest class, yet which in ordinary times they might be glad to have. As a matter of course, this question of the relative status of buyers finds its counterpoise in an adjustment of prices, varying somewhat from ruling rates. The quotations we give are for first-class trade only. It is possible that some well-favored concerns are able to buy a shade under as it is probable that some have to pay over given quotations. We hear of the purchase of a considerable lot of sole leather by a prominent boot and shoe house on private terms, the figure said to be very low, but the transaction was certainly exceptional, since buyers can be found at price list figures without difficulty. No 2 Sole leather especially is in sharp demand. There is a somewhat easier feeling in uppers, and possibly our outside figures are now a shade too high. The change in tone that has taken place is due to a falling-off in demand natural at this season, and has no real significance, nor is it yet sufficiently marked or clearly defined to call for any alteration in quotations. Free exportation of B. A. sole leather and Buffalo sole leather to England continue, several large shipments having been made during the week.

LUMBER.—Owing to the scarcity of new buildings, and this being the duller season of the year, there is not much doing in retail yards, still there have been several lots sold to go South, and desirable lumber is eagerly picked up at good prices. Coarse and cull pine has not improved much in price, owing to the small amount being used at present, but will cost more to replace in spring. This is a favorable time to let out buildings, while there is dry stock to be got at present low rates.

OILS.—The demand for oils continues very light with no marked change in prices. *Naval stores.*—Turpentine is rather easier this week. *Rosins and Tars* unchanged. *Paints* very quiet. *Refined Petroleum.*—Firm, at 13c per wine gal. f.o.b. at London; here, cars 16½c; part cars, 16½c; small lots, 17c; single brls., 18c; Benzine, 20c to 25c; Olive, winter pressed, lots, 20c single barrels; 25c per wine gal.

PROVISIONS.—*Butter.*—Shipments of the stock purchased last week have kept some portion of the trade quite busy; otherwise there has been very little doing. The season is now fully come when the local market of necessity must gradually lose interest until new butter makes its appearance. The recent speculative deal may be cited as the last flicker of the candle of the season's business, and the figure would seem to be the more fitting, since there is the possibility of the candle's going out with a bad odor. Advices received since the venture was entered upon have not been so encouraging as those which gave it birth; milder weather, an easier feeling, difficulty in effecting sales, are not the kind of reports most agreeable to consignors, yet such have come to hand, and naturally have served to give the market a sober cast. Within a day or two, however, the situation has bettered. Colder weather is advised, and a consequent burdening in prices and improvement in tone. The fate of shipments on the way is about the only matter of real interest in