

THE BUSINESS SITUATION.

Winnipeg, Saturday, Nov. 6.

Reports from the wholesale trade are generally very satisfactory this week. Business is good for the season in about all lines. There is some complaint that the weather has been too fine and mild to fur her purchasing in dry goods, clothing, boots and shoes, furs, etc., but at the same time, dealers in these branches report their trade for October considerably ahead of last year in volume. Holiday goods in fancy lines are now going out, and stocks for the early spring trade are arriving to take advantage of water rates before the close of navigation. Railway traffic is very active, with continued large movement of wheat to lake ports, shipments of live stock, and the usual inward rush of traffic before the close of navigation. All statistical information attests the larger volume of trade this season. Customs collections at Winnipeg for October were \$77,223, compared with \$45,553 for October of last year. Bank clearings again this week show an enormous expansion over the corresponding period of last year. Clearings at Winnipeg for October (see report in another column) show almost double the aggregate clearings for October in previous years. Land sales by the large land corporations show almost the same expansion which indicates faith in Manitoba farm lands as well as increasing settlement. Interest rates are steady at 8 per cent for loans on farm mortgage securities, 6 to 7 per cent for good city real property security and 7 per cent for ordinary mercantile business. Loan companies report payments on account of farm mortgages as good.

WINNIPEG MARKETS.

Winnipeg, Saturday Afternoon, Nov. 6
COAL AND WOOD.

The expected advance in bituminous coal, foreshadowed in The Commercial a couple of weeks ago, went into effect the first of this week, and was even a sharper and more upward tendency than was expected. On Lethbridge coal an advance of \$1 per ton was made, from \$6.50 to \$7.50 per ton delivered in Winnipeg to consumers. Imported soft coal was advanced 50c per ton. Souris lignite and anthracite are unchanged. Lethbridge coal has been sold here for some time on an exceedingly small margin; and the recently increased cost of production through an advance in wages, etc., rendered a sharp advance in the Winnipeg price absolutely necessary.

Coalwood is firm in price. Good, dry tamarac very scarce and the tendency has been higher for this class of wood fuel. The most of the tamarac obtainable is last winter's cut, which is not thoroughly dry yet. It was expected a large cut of wood would be made this winter, but it is claimed that the number of men and horses taken from this district, but

work on the Crow's Nest railway, will have the effect of curtailing work in the woods here this winter, through a scarcity of help. See coal and wood prices on another page.

DRUGS.

Coal hver oil has advanced sharply in Norway. Sugar of lead is 3-4c to 1c higher east. Quinine is very firm. See prices on another page.

FISH AND OYSTERS.

Oysters are having a good sale now and prices are lower than earlier quotations. Shell oysters are offering more freely. Some small lots have been in, and a carlot is now on the way. The variety of fish in the market is about the same. See quotation on another page.

GREEN FRUITS AND NUTS.

Winter apples are now coming in freely, both Ontario and southern stock. Owing to the warm weather this fall, some fear has been expressed that apples will not show as good keeping quality as usual, as it is said that warm autumn seasons are not productive of good keeping fruit. However, this will be proved or disproved later on. Ontario grapes are not in good condition now for re-shipment, as they are getting soft, and the season is about over for anything but Catawbas, which may come in later, though none are here yet. An auction sale of Concord grapes was held to clear out stock that was getting off quality, and some sold for less than the freight cost. No reports re bananas have come to hand lately. It depends on the quarantining situation south whether or not they will continue to come to hand. Oregon pears are 25c lower. Malaga grapes are 50c lower than first quotation for the season, given last week. New stocks of nuts are coming to hand. New figs are lower. Ontario pears are about done. Prices are as follows: Jamaica oranges, \$13 per barrel, equal to about 21-2 boxes; Mexican oranges, \$6.50 box; bananas per bunch, \$2.50 to \$3; California lemons, \$5 to \$5.50 a box; Washington and Oregon pears, \$2 to \$2.25 per box; apples, \$4 to \$4.50 per barrel for fall and winter varieties; Concord grapes, 30c 10 lb baskets; California grapes \$2.50 to \$3 per crate for Tokays; Ontario pears 60 to 65c per 20 lb. basket; Cape Cod cranberries, \$10 per barrel; sweet potatoes, \$5 to \$5.25 per barrel; Malaga grapes, \$8 per keg, for medium and \$8.50 for heavy weights; new chestnuts, 15c lb.; Ontario hicknuts, 4c lb.; Ontario black walnuts, 8c lb.; coconuts, \$1 per dozen, figs, fancy clemes, \$1.50 to \$1.60 per 10 lb box.

GROCERIES.

Changes in prices are not important this week. Tomatoes have had a stronger tendency of late. In this line there has been a good deal of cutting in this market, but prices have now steadied down and settled on a higher basis. It is said that as low as \$2.10 was accepted on tomatoes in a few special cases, though there was nothing in them at this price even for those who were fortunate enough to buy at the bottom prices of the season. Recently, however, tomatoes have been very firm in first hands and the local cutting has been discontinued. Manufacturers have advanced prices about 30c from the low point of the season on new goods. Rio coffee is easier and prices here are 2c to 3c lower than was quoted earlier. There is some inquiry for dates, but

no new fruit is to hand, yet. There is some old fruit held, but is of rather poor quality now. Dates do not reach the market until December, and there is no prospect of any stock yet. New Grenobl' walnuts will arrive at New York about the middle of November, so that it will be some time before they reach this market. There has been some enquiry from the country for this line. Fancy grades of rice are locally very scarce, though there is plenty of B. rice, and common grades in stock here.

HARNESS AND LEATHER.

Dealers report business decidedly good. The season has been a good one for this branch. Dolges felt is having quite a sale to shoemakers for repair and other work. It is used in half soles felt shoes, etc.

There is one point which manufacturers of leather goods should consider carefully, and that is the increased cost of leather. There is often a tendency to go on selling goods at the old price, and not taking account of the increased cost through an advance in the raw material. Some harness makers are evidently doing that in Manitoba. It is claimed that at the present price of leather, it will cost about \$2 more to turn out an ordinary team harness than it would at the former price of leather. This means a heavy drain on makers of harness, saddles, collars, etc., unless they have advanced their prices in proportion. The cost of production is a very important item, which should be cultivated upon closely, as in a business where the margin of profit is small, a moderate increase in the cost of raw material may soon turn a margin of profit into an actual loss. Harness makers should see to it that they secure a price commensurate with the advance in leather.

HARDWARE, PAINTS, ETC.

Business is somewhat quieter, though good for the season. Glass is moving freely, and is one of the most active lines just now. Prices are steady this week, the general tendency being very firm for all staple lines. See quotations on another page.

In stoves and tinware dealers report that they have been very busy. There has been a good sale for stoves this season, notwithstanding the mild weather. Steel ranges are still being peddled in the country among farmers, though this business is pretty well killed now. Inferior ranges are being sold in this way at a price about ten per cent higher than is asked for a better stove by regular dealers. It is difficult, however, to educate consumers in the country against trusting to fakir peddlars.

LUMBER, ETC.

There is still a considerable movement in lumber, though the season is now well over. Storm sash has been moving freely. The lumber camps in the woods are now well established, for the winter's cut of logs, which will be larger than for some years back.

RAW FURS.

A few small lots are beginning to come in, principally fall rat, which have been taken at an average of about 51-2c each. A few skunk, mink and bear are also arriving, but no really prime furs have been received. At the last London fur sales, a report of which will be found in another column, skunk, spring rat, and lynx were lower while bear, red fox, marten, wolf and fall rat were higher. Beaver, mink and otter were the same as last sales.