

COMMODITY MARKETS

Week's Wholesale Review

Dun's Bulletin says of Montreal trade: The Saturday and Monday heatless days naturally had a more or less disturbing effect on business, while another excessive snowfall, with heavy winds, has further intensified the railway congestion, and blocked the country roads. General collections, however, may almost be qualified as good, and the failure list is a remarkably light one.

Weather conditions have been rather unfavorable for the millinery trade, and business has been on the dull side, but the lengthening days will work improvement, and the wholesale spring openings are fixed for March 4th. Dry goods men found a big accumulation of orders in Tuesday morning's mail, but look for some slackening up as the result of this week's storm and impeded communications.

In the hardware line business has opened up well with the country, but owing to the practical stoppage of building operations city trade is quite limited. A general advance in paint prices appears to be expected.

There is a steady consumptive demand for staple groceries, with no notable variations in prices. Notwithstanding the abundant sugar crop in Cuba, the apportionment of which to the various refining companies is in the hands of an official commission, the difficulties of transportation have become more acute, and there is a reported possibility that some of the local companies may have to shut down temporarily. The discontinuance of the rebate system by refiners is also reported as likely. With the advent of Lent there is an active demand for fish, with prices higher as a rule than in former years. The high figures for hams and bacon, and the present fasting season, have considerably affected the demand, which is quite light at present. Eggs are still in limited supply, bringing very high prices, and butter shows advance under active enquiry and some scarcity of margarine. For the new standard flour there is quite an active demand.

In the boot and shoe manufacturing trade matters remain comparatively quiet, not only in this important centre, but also at all other points. Apart from some moderate export of sole to the United States, the leather market is inactive.

The heavy snows are considerably impeding lumbering operations.

For the week only five small district failures are reported, with liabilities of \$27,000.

Bradstreet's Montreal weekly trade report says: All commercial and industrial establishments were closed for three days during the past week by instructions of the Government Fuel Controller in order to conserve coal. Negotiations are in progress between the American and Canadian Governments in regard to daylight saving.

There is good foundation for the report that two of our large steel industries will amalgamate, and, if they do, they will probably enter the shipbuilding industry at the request of the Canadian Government. These companies will become of enormous importance in Canadian industries, and one of the largest in America, as they now own their own mines for the production of iron ore and coal.

The railways have placed an embargo on all classes of freight with the exception of perishable goods, live stock, coal, munitions and Government war requirements. This affects all shipments moving in and out of Canada and also to and from the United States. Severe weather and heavy snowstorms have greatly detained train movements. A new and peculiar feature about this situation is that freight trains have now a preference over passenger traffic.

It is the intention of our Government to purchase the entire crop of Canadian wool of the coming clip. The big order given to the Canadian Cotton Mills for khaki cloth amounting to two million yards for the American Army will be completed by the end of next month.

Owing to delays in transportation of raw sugars, wholesalers are compelled to limit the quantity of refined sugars to each customer, and retailers have cut their supplies down to two pounds for each customer. The retail trade has felt the effect of the closing down order, especially the Saturday trade,

which is the biggest day of the week in the retail trade.

Remittances are coming in well; city collections are only fair.

COUNTRY PRODUCE.

BUTTER.

The receipts of butter for the week ending February 15th, 1918, were 1,566 packages, which shows a decrease of 2,126 packages as compared with the previous week, and an increase of 54 packages with the same week last year, and the total receipts since May 1st, 1917, to date show a decrease of 114,884 packages as compared with the corresponding period last year. The butter continues to be very strong in tone and last week prices of all grades scored a further advance of 1c per lb., which makes a net rise since the first of the year of 5c per lb. As the supply on spot especially of the better grades is very scarce higher prices are looked for. A fair trade was done during the week including sales of some round lots at 49½c to 50c per lb. for finest creamery, one lot of 850 packages selling at 49½c, and several sales of finest dairy butter were made at 41½c to 42c. On account of Lent and the fact that retailers generally were carrying small stocks, the trade in a wholesale jobbing way has been fairly active with sales of finest creamery at 50c per lb., in solid packages, and at 51c per lb., in 1-lb. blocks. A good trade has also been done in oleomargarine, and prices have ruled firm at 30c to 33c per lb. as to quality.

We quote wholesale prices as follows:

Finest Sept. and Oct. creamery	0.49½	0.50
Fine Sept. and Oct. creamery	0.48½	0.49
Current receipts, creamery	0.47	0.47½
Finest dairy	0.42½	0.43
Fine dairy	0.41½	0.42

CHEESE.

The receipts of cheese for the week ending February 16th, 1918, were 302 boxes, which show a decrease of 127 boxes as compared with the previous week, and a decrease of 2,659 boxes with the same week last year, while the total receipts since May 1st, 1917, to date show a decrease of 411,262 boxes as compared with the corresponding period a year ago. Except for an improved demand from local buyers for fresh supplies the cheese situation showed no changes last week. Sales of several fair sized lots of 20-lb. cheese were made at 22¼c per lb., with holders now asking more money for the balance of their holdings.

The Commission is paying the following prices:

No. 1 cheese	21¼c
No. 2 cheese	21¼c
No. 3 cheese	20¾c

EGGS.

The receipts for the week ending February 16, 1918, were 1,686 cases as against 3,246 for the previous one, and 2,797 for the same week last year. The total receipts from May 1st, 1917, to February 16th, 1918, were 312,955 cases, as compared with 637,748 for the corresponding period a year ago. Owing to the continued scarcity of fresh gathered eggs coming forward and the small quantities of storage eggs on hand dealers have been importing eggs from the United States which have met with a steady demand and in a wholesale jobbing way at 70c per dozen, but the prospects are that prices for this class of stock will come lower in the near future as receipts of such at all the leading American centres are steadily increasing, which are bound to have a depressing influence on that market. Prices generally were increased 2c per dozen for fresh and storage eggs; a fairly active trade was done as the demand was good.

We quote current prices as follows:

Strictly new laid eggs	0.70
Fresh eggs	0.58 0.60
Fall fresh eggs	0.52 0.54
Selected cold storage	0.48 0.50
No. 1 cold storage	0.45 0.47

POULTRY.

The market for dressed poultry remains practically unchanged. Receipts have been smaller — this is due to the heatless holidays and the bad roads — and so the tone of the market has ruled very firm. The demand for turkeys, ducks and geese was in

excess of the supply and buyers found it difficult to fill their orders.

We quote prices as follows:—

Turkeys, per lb.	0.35	0.36
Milk fed chickens	0.35	0.36
No. 1 chickens	0.31	0.33
Choice fowl	0.27	0.30
Ducks, per lb.	0.26	0.30
Geese, per lb.	0.24	0.28

POTATOES.

A weaker feeling developed in the market for potatoes towards the end of the week and prices declined 5c to 10c per bag. The trade for domestic consumption was fair and also for export to the United States. The market closed easy with Green Mountains in a wholesale jobbing way quoted at \$2.10 to \$2.15, Ontario white stock at \$2 to \$2.10, and reds at \$1.90 to \$2 per bag of 80 lbs., ex-store.

BEANS.

There was an improved demand from local buyers for beans during the week and sales of some fair sized lots were made, including one lot of 75,000 pounds at 12½c per lb. A few other lots at \$7 to \$7.50 per bushel. The receipts of beans from Ontario do not show any increase, and according to all reports few cars are offering for shipment.

LOCAL FLOUR.

There is a great scarcity of winter wheat flour on spot and the prospects of fresh supplies are not encouraging as deliveries from Ontario farmers are very light, many mills being closed down while those running are operating on spring wheat flour. The new Government standard grade is quoted at \$10.70 per bbl., in bags f.o.b. cars Montreal.

The badly congested state of the railroads and the extremely cold weather are together responsible for the difficulty millers are experiencing in getting sufficient spring wheat flour forward to meet their requirements. They complain that their mills have had to operate irregularly lately due to this lack of supplies. The demand for the new standard spring wheat flour has continued good, and quite an active business was done for prompt and nearby delivery, with sales of car lots for shipment to country points at \$11.10 per bbl. in bags f.o.b. cars, Montreal, and car lots to city bakers, at \$11.20 delivered, while broken lots to grocers and city bakers have sold at \$11.30 delivered. The tone of the market for rye flour has been strong and prices have advanced 40c per bag owing to the good demand and the limited supplies available, with sales at \$5.90 per bag delivered. The trade in corn flour is fair, which is also scarce and firm at \$6.50 per bag delivered.

MILLFEED AND ROLLED OATS.

Supplies of millfeed here are becoming scarcer and the condition of the market has become more acute than ever since the passing of an order by the Food Controller forbidding only a very limited amount of the output of the mills west of Fort William from being shipped East. Stocks on spot are reported as being nearly exhausted. The enquiry from all over the country for straight cars of bran shorts is heavy owing to the fact that the consumption at this period of the year is probably heavier than at any other, but buyers find it very difficult to satisfy their wants, as millers generally are only allowing each buyer small quantities in mixed car orders. Bran is selling at \$35, shorts at \$40, and middlings at \$48 to \$50 per ton, including bags, in mixed cars, delivered. A good trade continues to be done in pure grain moullie, and prices are firm at \$64 to \$65 per ton.

ROLLED OATS.

Prices of rolled oats, in sympathy with the strong upward tendency of prices for oats, were marked up 5c to 15c per bag in cotton, but no change was announced in jute. The trade was fairly active with sales of broken lots of standard grades at \$5.50 per bag of 90 lbs. in jute, and at \$5.30 to \$5.40 per bag of 90 lbs. in cotton.

Flour:	per barrel.
New Government standard grade	10.70
Cereals:	
Rolled oats, 90 lb. bag	5.30 5.50
Feed:	per ton.
Bran	35.00
Shorts	40.00
Middlings	48.00 50.00
Moullie, pure grain grades	64.00 65.00