

## THE BUSINESS SITUATION

Winnipeg, Saturday, April 23.

Spring work in the country has progressed under favorable conditions and a large area of crop has been sown. The rains this week have come in good time and have added materially to the favorable outlook. The crop area is sure to show a large increase over any previous year, when the full returns are in. The building season is opening quite actively in Winnipeg, and promises to be the briskest for a number of years, particularly in the erection of new and the remodelling of old business blocks. City real estate, after a long quiet time, has developed some activity, and quite a number of important business premises have changed hands, several sales being in the nature of investments for interest earning purposes, and not for commercial purposes. A feature of the week is the announcement of the Manitoba government that it has been decided to grant aid to three railways, one with the ultimate object of securing another through line to Lake Superior, another which it is expected will finally develop into a Hudson Bay railway, and the third a short local line. These roads are all expected to go ahead this year and will make considerable activity in railway building. In the west the Crow's Nest road is being pushed vigorously ahead. About 1,000 laborers have been recently sent out to increase the force working on this road. Bank clearings at Winnipeg this week were about double the corresponding week of last year. General wholesale trade is moving in fair volume.

## WINNIPEG MARKETS

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BOOTS AND SHOES.

Travellers are working for fall orders. Rubber goods are firm. We reported an advance of 10 per cent. a short time ago on rubber goods, including belting and heavy goods. Rubber shoes and boots have since been advanced 5 to 10 per cent., owing to the high price of crude rubber. As the retailers' profit on rubbers is very small, this advance in the wholesale price will make a considerable difference to the trade.

### FISH.

Stocks of haddies are being cleaned out and the supply remaining is limited. The oyster trade is now quiet and after this month bulk oysters will be out of this market and only cans will be available. Stocks of cured fish are very low. Prices are steady for fresh fish. Some Lake Winnipegosis white have been offering here. It is said the companies are arranging to restrict the white fish catch on Lake Winnipeg this season, to prevent overstocking the market.

### GROCERIES.

There has not been much change in the local market. Cured meats have advanced sharply in the United States

on account of the war, according to advices received here, prices quoted at packing points south being about 1-2c higher for hog products, including lard. Canned beef has also been advanced 5c per dozen, owing to big war orders having been placed. Coffee is very strong. Oatmeal is very firm and costing higher to lay down here. Sugars were advanced 3-16 at the refineries, on the strength of the new tariff, but later a reduction of 1-16c was made, making a net gain of 1-8c.

### GREEN FRUITS.

The orange market is very strong, prices have advanced 25c per box in California, which will necessitate a further advance of a like amount here making an advance of 50c in all, with the advance quoted last week. A strong market is looked for right along now for the balance of the season, and further advances are expected. Lemons are firm. The Spanish trouble is expected to interfere with Mediterranean fruit. It is not known how the quality of the California stock will answer for the summer market. Bananas are arriving of good quality, but the future is uncertain, owing to further troubles in Central America, and the Cuban trouble. Pine plant is coming. It sold early in the week at \$3, but dropped to-day to \$2.75. Pine apples are lower. Prices are: Navel oranges, \$3.75 to \$4.00; California seedling oranges, \$3.00 to \$3.25; bananas, per bunch, \$2.25 to \$2.50, as to size; California lemons, \$3.75 to \$4 per box; apples, \$1 to \$1.50 per barrel for good to choice; off quality, \$2 to \$3.50 per barrel, as to condition; pineapples, \$3 per dozen; coconuts, \$1 per dozen; Sicily filberts, large 11c to 12c per lb; Grenoble walnuts, 14c; figs, clemes 10 lb boxes, \$1.25 to \$1.40, as to quality; 50 lb boxes, 17c per lb; dates, 61-2 to 7c per lb; Tarragona almonds, 121-2 to 13c, peanuts, green, 9c; peanuts, roasted, 12c; pecans, 14 to 15c; strained honey, 71-2 to 10c per lb; maple sugar 11 to 12c; syrup per dozen 1-2 gallon tins, \$7; apple cider, 35c per gallon in barrels and half barrels.

### HARDWARE.

There will not be much change in this branch until new goods begin to come in via water routes, when there will be some revision of prices. What changes there will be will depend on navigation rates this season, which are yet partially unknown. Stocks of heavy goods here are, of course, light at this season. More goods have been brought in during the closed season of navigation than usual this year, owing to the larger trade enjoyed and also to tariff changes going into effect on January 1 this year. Bladder twine is firm. The last advices received quoted raw sisal actually higher than manilla. Sisal is now quoted at about 43-4 to 47-8c and raw manilla at 45-8 to 43-4c. This is an extraordinary condition. To show the advance in the raw material, a year ago sisal was quoted at 27-8c.

### LUMBER.

In the wholesale trade the demand has not been as large as it was earlier. This is owing to dealers having replenished their stocks somewhat, which were low. The outlook is still very good for the lumber trade both in the city and country. Prices are steady and firm.

### GRAIN AND PRODUCE.

WHEAT—The wheat markets have kept going up steadily this week, mak-

ing a small gain on Monday and sharper gain on the four following days. The speculative sentiment caused by the war situation is no doubt the cause of the movement, though it is difficult to see what good ground there is for a "boom" in wheat on this account. Local prices have advanced steadily and reached \$1.10 Thursday for No. 1 hard afloat Fort William. There has not been much Manitoba wheat, however, available for trading purposes. Most of the 2,000,000 bushels held at interior points is owned by millers, and farmers are not likely to have much wheat for summer marketing, after they are through with their spring work. It looks as though Manitoba wheat will be held at a sharp premium for the balance of the crop year, and with light supplies to move, a dull season is in store for the trade until a new crop comes in. Wheat receipts at the Fort William elevators for last week were 5,200 bushels; shipments, 3,200; in store, 336,000 bushels.

FLOUR—The market is firmer, irregular and unsettled. The Ogilvie company advanced prices again 10c per barrel this week, making with the advances last week 30c in all, making \$2.65 for patent; \$2.45 for Glenora; \$2.05 for second bakers; and \$1.55 for XXXX per sack of 98 lbs. Lake of the Woods were, however, quoting old prices as follows. Patent, \$2.50; best bakers \$2.30; second bakers \$1.90. XXX, \$1.40 per sack of 98 lbs, with discount of 5c net cash.

MILLED—Prices are firm, the demand is large, and the supply scarce. We quote bran at \$12 and shorts \$14 per ton in bulk. Large lots \$1 per ton less.

GROUND FEED—Pure grain feed is quoted at \$22 to \$24 for rolled oat feed. Inferior mixed mill feed, \$18 to \$20 per ton. Ground corn feed is higher and now quoted at \$17 to \$18 per ton. Oil cake scarce at \$22 per ton.

OATMEAL—Owing to the advancing tendency of oats in the States, oatmeal is costing higher to lay down here. Some is now coming in from Ontario, one car of small sacks having been placed here at equal to \$1.30 for 80 lb. sacks. Imported meal from the South has been quoted at \$1.70 per sack. It is said that some meal has been laid down here at such a low price from the States that it has started a rumor of under valuation. Small lots of rolled oats to the retail trade are quoted at \$2 per 80 lb. sack.

BARLEY—Nominal at about 40c. Seed barley nominal at 45 to 50c.

OATS—Prices are firm. Feed oats are held stiff at about 40 to 42c per bushel for car lots on track.

CORN—We quote 40 to 41c per bushel of 56 pounds for cars on track here.

BUTTER—Creamery—The factories are not doing anything yet, worth mentioning. Creamery butter is nominal at about 22 to 23c.

Butter—Dairy—There is still a light supply, and a good demand for all the butter offering. The new butter season opens with good prospects. There are no stocks of old butter held. In Eastern markets it is said that stocks of held butter are very low, and certainly the local market is unusually bare of supplies. The trade has been supplied in a hand to mouth way for some time. This is at least a favorable outlook for the new season now starting, as there are no stocks of held goods to depress the market.