

laborers as yet, and the number who have to loiter around Winnipeg waiting for employment is still few. The greatest change in the labor supply compared with this time last year, is in connection with mechanics who are employed at out door labor. A year ago they were very scarce, and their wages as summer advanced rose to fancy figures. Bricklayers last fall got as high as \$6.50 a day, while now they can be hired at a little over half that figure. Carpenters and all mechanics depending upon building operations are equally plentiful, and quite a little disappointment is expressed at the small demand for this class of labor, by men who have been lured here by fabulous reports of projected building operations published some time ago in Winnipeg papers, and copied by the eastern press. Mechanics do not have matters all their own way, as they had a year ago, and numbers have left for British Columbia and other districts where booms are looked for. As an instance. Wagon and carriage makers and carriage painters left their regular employment and took to building carpenter and building painting work, because higher wages could be secured at these latter. Now the wagon shops have no difficulty in getting all the men they require, and more if they called for them. In door mechanical work is quite brisk and mechanics are by no means plentiful, especially in connection with the iron branches, in which there is great activity.

Although the labor market of the city is in quite a healthy state, and if the high hopes of some mechanics have been brought to disappointment, it is only in keeping with the experience of all who have built their calculations upon a continuation of the inflated state of affairs which existed during 1881 and the first half of 1882.

Lake Grain Freights.

The supply of shipping ready to carry grain eastward from Chicago is evidently beyond the demand at present, if we are to judge from the subjoined article from the North-Western Miller of last week. The figures contained in the same will enable grain men here to form an idea of what grain could be carried from Port Arthur to the Atlantic seaboard for. The voyage from Port Arthur is about equal to that from Chicago, and freights need not be any higher. The following is the article in question:—

The marine grain carrying business at Chicago is demoralized. Rates for several days have been at a range of from 2 to 2½¢, and vessel men are discouraged at the prospect. A drop in a few days to 1½¢ is predicted. The Times says that the real cause of this unsatisfactory condition is the abnormal state of the grain market at Chicago and at the seaboard. Wheat and corn are relatively higher in Chicago than they are in New York, making it virtually impossible for shippers to fill their orders. Wheat quoted at \$1.13 in Chicago is worth only \$1.18 in New York, while the freight of at least 7½¢ added to the Chicago prices would make it cost \$1.20½ to the shipper when at New York. This accounts, continues the Times, for the fact that there has been no wheat shipped from Chicago for the past three weeks. With corn the case is

almost as bad. There is plenty of grain at Chicago to ship, but shippers say they can not move it with any degree of safety until prices are adjusted between Chicago and New York. Either the Chicago price must fall or the price at New York come up, in order to produce a proper equilibrium. When that is accomplished grain will move forward freely, and the prospect for favorable rates for grain carriers will improve.

Carrying Over.

We extract the following from the New York Miller's Journal of last week:

"The readers of THE JOURNAL may have noticed that it is paying considerable attention this season to crop reports, but this will not prevent it from giving due prominence to the various estimates respecting the surplus and reserves of the country which our contemporaries may from time to time promulgate. Now, one of the more important questions relating to the wheat markets is, how much surplus we are likely to carry over at harvest time from the crop of 1882. After allowing liberally for further exports, and 20,000,000 bushels additional "for the filling up of holes which were emptied to an unusually low point at the close of the twelve months following the poor crop of 1881," the Chicago Tribune thinks that "we shall still have a surplus of about 70,000,000 bushels on hand at the beginning of next harvest, if the Washington crop estimates were nearly correct." It is a matter of some importance to know whether there is likely to be 70,000,000 bushels of old wheat left in the country by next harvest time, after providing for exports and 20,000,000 bushels additional for "filling up holes."

Open Board of Trade.

At the formal opening of this institution yesterday there appeared from the speeches of certain of its promoters to be a disposition to unite with the usual business of such institutions the functions of a grain and produce exchange. Such a union has never proved a success in any place on this or any other continent and it is very improbable that it will do so in Winnipeg.

The institution just floated may prove of value in connection with the purchase and sale of mining and other stocks, and to brokers in such will no doubt be useful. But it is not at all likely that the legitimate grain and provision men of the city will join interests, especially as a grain exchange is likely to be organized in the city very soon.

THERE seems to be a difficulty about the mails between Minneapolis and Winnipeg. Either the post office folk at the latter place are careless about sending off mails, or they are delayed by the road. Letters leaving Minneapolis on Saturday afternoon are not delivered in Winnipeg until Tuesday forenoon. Between two such prominent cities, mail matter should certainly be conveyed in less time than three days.

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