

THE BUSINESS SITUATION

Saturday, October 20.

The business situation is considerably improved. At least there is a better feeling noticeable and the general tone is more hopeful. Reports from the country say that this has been a week of great activity in the harvest fields. Farmers have been working night and day getting their grain threshed and stored in granary. The general opinion seems to be that threshing returns are better than could be reasonably expected after the prolonged rains of August and September. A good deal of the wheat is being bought for No. 2 and 3 hard. Receipts at country markets have increased but are still very light compared with other years and there is not the slightest difficulty this year in getting it moved to terminal points. The difficulty with the railway companies is to get enough to make up trains. Mercantile trade has improved with the weather. A fairly good sorting business is now being done by city jobbing houses and staple lines are also moving more freely. Building operations in the city are again quite active and there is a scarcity of carpenters and painters at the moment due to the large demand for these for finishing work. Exports of cattle from the western ranges are still quite heavy and the shipments are showing fine quality. The statement of the Winnipeg clearing house for this week shows a falling off of \$1,193,047 as compared with a year ago, but as there were only five business days in the clearing house week, which ends Thursday, as against six last year the falling off may be partly accounted for in this way. After deducting the daily average, however, there is still a heavy falling off.

WINNIPEG MARKETS

Saturday, October 13.

(All quotations, unless otherwise specified, are wholesale for such quantities as are usually taken by retail dealers, and are subject to the usual reduction on large quantities and to cash discounts.)

BOOTS AND SHOES.

The improved weather conditions and crop outlook has had a stimulating effect upon boot and shoe trade and local houses report a better sorting business this week. Stocks of fall goods in the country begin to need replenishing. A fairly good trade is looked for now up to the middle of December. Travellers on the road with samples of spring goods are sending in some very nice orders, but the majority of merchants prefer to put off placing their orders until later so that they may see how things turn out. They are pursuing what may be called a cautious policy. Prices on all lines hold steady and there is no disposition to cut.

BUILDING MATERIAL.

Building operations have revived considerably and there is accordingly a good demand for material at the moment, especially stone and lime. A number of foundations are yet to be put in before the winter opens and masons are taking advantage of the fine weather to push along the work. Brick is also still being taken in considerable quantities. Prices remain unchanged as follows: Stonewall rubble, \$3.50 per cord, Stonewall footing, \$3.50 per cord, Stony Mountain rubble, \$4.00 per cord. White lime is worth 20c per bushel, and grey lime 15c per bushel, all f.o.b. at quarry and kiln. Brick quoted here at \$10 per thousand for kiln run and \$11 per thousand for veneer.

DRY GOODS.

Sorting business has improved. Yesterday's accumulation of two day's orders threw jobbing houses into a more active condition than they have been for some time. All sorts of fall goods are now in moderately good demand. The firm tone of the manufacturers in regard to prices and recent advances in cottons has had the effect of stimulating buying in some directions as the retail trades feel that they have nothing to gain by delay in

ordering all the goods they will require. On the other hand there is no disposition anywhere to over stock.

FISH.

Fresh caught whitefish are done, but there are plenty of cold storage fish. New Innan huddle are selling at 11 cents per pound. We quote: Whitefish, fresh caught, 50c per lb. pickered, 4c pike, 3c, trout, 10c; salmon, 12½c, mackerel, 15c; salt cod, 7c; Labrador herring, ½-barrel, \$3.90 oysters, select, \$2.25 per gallon; standards, \$2.00.

GREEN FRUITS.

Winter apples are now arriving daily and show good quality. The only sort of oranges available are Jamaicas, which are quoted at \$10.00 per barrel of about 400. Prices of all regular lines of fruit remain unchanged. We quote as follows: Apples, Nova Scotia, winters, per barrel, \$4.50, spies, extra fancy, \$3.25; other varieties, \$3.00; greenings, \$2.75; snow apples, \$3.50; oranges, Jamaicas, per barrel, \$10.00, or per hundred 83 lemons, Californias, 300-350 in case \$6.00; cranberries, per barrel, \$5.50; tokay grapes, per crate, \$2.50; California, winter nells pears, per case, \$3.00; Washington, winter nells pears, per case, \$2.00; late red plums, Cal., \$1.50; Washington plums, \$1.25; concord grapes, per basket, 27c; Niagara, 30c, Rogers', 40c, Rogers' blacks, 40c; Malaga grapes, per keg, \$8.50; onions, per pound, 3c, or in 5-case lots, 24c; Spanish onions, per crate, \$1.50, with 10c off 5-case lots, figs, cold storage stock, \$1.00 per box of 10 lbs, California figs, new, per 10-lb box, \$1.30; dates, 7c.

GROCERIES.

Trade is fairly active in this market, but collections are slow. We note several important price changes this week. In canned goods things have been fairly steady here. Canned tomatoes are being offered by some independent concerns at prices lower than what we quote and jobbers are handling their goods at \$2.15 to \$2.20, as against the regular price of \$2.25 to \$2.30 for association goods. Canned lunch tongue is 25c per dozen dearer. Cereals are in fairly active demand and prices have changed on some lines. Split peas now quoted at \$2.25 to \$2.50 as against \$2.50 last week. Rolled oats are 10c per sack dearer. Standard and granulated oatmeal are 20c per sack lower. Dried currants continue to excite interest here and outside are now 2c per pound higher than they were when present Winnipeg scale was adopted, which means that new stocks would cost that much more here. New Valencia layer raisins are about 40c per box higher here than old stock was costing. Evaporated apples are somewhat easier and are quoted ¼ to ½c under prices of a week ago. Dried apples are scarce. New prunes are in and prices are a little lower for small sizes and large sizes are dearer. Matches remain unchanged and there are no Eddy matches to be had. Sugars are the same as a week ago. Wood-ware is scarce on some lines, and local jobbers have not yet been able to secure new stock at recent reductions at factories.

HARDWARE.

The local market is steady and unchanged. Prices here do not reflect any of the recent eastern changes as stocks on hand were bought before those changes took effect. It is expected that a new list will be announced very shortly for cartridges as United States manufacturers have recently made some changes and others are expected. Winnipeg prices are given elsewhere in this issue.

PAINTS, OILS AND GLASS.

There have been no special features in this line here during the week. Prices are steady and firm for most lines as present stocks were bought at lower prices than they could be replaced for. This is particularly so in regard to glass. A further upward movement is reported in lined oil at eastern distributing centres. At New York on Thursday last prices went up 2c per gallon and other American markets are following. The poor outlook for the flax crop is the principal cause of this firmness. Turpentine is steady at Savannah according to latest mail advices, and receipts were improving. For Winnipeg prices see elsewhere in this issue.

SCRAP.

The scrap market is quiet pending the result of the presidential elections. There is no disposition on the part of

United States concerns to push business until that event is over. Rubber is the most active article in the list. The market for this is very firm and prices at factories are expected to go higher. We quote Winnipeg buyers prices as follows. No. 1 cast iron, free from wrought and malleable, \$13 to \$14 per ton; No. 2, \$5 ton; wrought iron scrap, \$5 ton; heavy copper, 10c per pound; red brass, 8c per pound; yellow brass, heavy, 7c per pound; light brass, 4½ to 5c per pound; lead pipe or tea lead, 2c to 2½c; rags, country mixed, 50c per 100 pounds; rubbers, free from rivets, buckles and articles, 5½c per pound, zinc scrap 1c per lb, bones, clean, dry and bleached, 35 per ton.

GRAIN AND PRODUCE.

WHEAT.—A gradual decline in prices has characterized the situation in the wheat markets the past week, the result being a loss of 2c per bushel in values from this day week. The special features that have influenced the market have been a continuance of favorable weather over the Northwest spring wheat country for the safe gathering of the crop and threshing, there having now been two full weeks in succession in which there has been no rain. Then the movement of wheat by inland and ocean freight has been large and there has been a goodly addition to reserve stocks. Besides this, Russia and southeastern Europe show up well in the weekly shipments, and are reported to be offering wheat at lower figures, which is taken to mean that the supply behind is abundant. Indeed it is stated that Roumania has 30,000,000 bushels more wheat than last year. Along with all this there are good reports of the winter wheat seedling from both Europe and the United States. In the latter country the crop is nearly all in the ground, and the early sown fields are green and making seasonable progress. The prospects for the Indian crop continue good, and sales of new crop have been made to London, although the wheat will not be harvested before February. In the same way Argentine wheat of the new crop is being sold in the European markets for future delivery. There is also a lack of support to speculative markets, and in the face of abundant supplies in sight, the present favorable prospects for the future crops, there is nothing surprising in the weakness of the market. The American visible supply increased last week 1,577,000 bushels compared with a decrease of 3,000 bushels the previous week and an increase of 2,975,000 bushels same week last year. The world's shipments for the week were very heavy, 9,283,000 bushels compared to 8,155,000 bushels previous week and 8,271,000 bushels a year ago. The world's visible supply according to Bradstreet's increased 4,275,000 bushels compared to a decrease previous week of 736,000 bushels and an increase same week a year ago of 6,650,000 bushels.

The local market is still quiet and inactive, as notwithstanding two weeks of fine weather, very little wheat is moving yet. Last week the car inspections at this point numbered 258, this week they may probably foot up 460, but last year at this time they averaged about 300 daily. In prices the tendency has been downward and 1 hard has lost about 4c on the week. Influenced by the decline in outside markets Ontario millers have become decidedly lukewarm towards Manitoba wheat. Their little demand has been the means of keeping 1 hard and higher grades 10c above export value, and they are beginning to wonder why they did it. One hard, 2 hard and 1 northern are going to be scarce grades during the current season and will doubtless carry more or less premium for domestic use, but the lower grades must come into line with export value, which probably means lower prices for them than are yet established. At present values are: One hard \$1½c, 2 hard and 1 northern \$1c, 3 hard 7½c, all in store Fort William, tough 2 hard 7½c, tough 3 hard 6½c, tough 3 northern 5½c, in store Fort William; damp and wet wheat 3 to 5c under tough wheat in store Fort Arthur.

FLOUR.—Flour prices are steady at both the big mills. Demand is good, orders being booked ahead. We quote: Ogilvie's Hungarian, \$2.30 per sack of 48lb; Glenora Patent, \$2.15; Lake of the Woods, Five Roses, \$2.30; Patent, \$2.15; Medora, \$1.70, and XXXX \$1.35 per sack.

MILLFEED.—Business is steady.

Bran is quoted at \$12.00 per ton, and shorts at \$14.00, in bulk, delivered.

GROUND FEED.—Prices maintain their previous level and the small supply of coarse grain is keeping the volume of sales down to a very low point. As soon as new grain is available prices will be lower. We quote: Oat chop, \$28 per ton; barley chop, \$21.50; mixed barley and oats, \$25; corn chop, \$22; oil cake, \$20 per ton.

COUNTRY WHEAT.—Deliveries of wheat at country points have improved this week, but are still comparatively light. Advances from the grain buyers say that farmers are putting the wheat in their granaries with the intention of cleaning it before selling. This is good policy and will please the trade very much as the grain is mostly very dirty this year. In some cases as much as 20 per cent. of cleanings have been taken out at elevators. Most of the grain now being delivered is from farms which are close to the towns, the wheat being drawn right from the thrasher to the elevator. Buyers have been paying 45c per bushel this week at 17½c points for the best wheat offering. This is expected to grade No. 2 or 3 hard.

OATS.—New oats are offering more freely and the price is now lower. The quality of new oats is very irregular and so also is the price. All the way from 35 to 40c is being named for carlots at Winnipeg. Transactions have taken place the end of the week at 30c and this seems to be the prevailing price for feed grades. No oats good enough for milling purposes have yet been seen. Carlots at country points are worth from 25 to 32c per bushel according to quality and freight rate.

BARLEY.—Carlots of new barley are being offered at 35c per bushel on track here but there is no disposition to buy freely. Deliveries are very light.

CORN.—A few cars are still coming in. Early in the week the price advanced to 51c per bushel, but dropped back again to 49c at which figure it still remains.

FLAX.—The flax crop is in bad shape according to latest advices owing to the damage by rains and it is not expected that there will be any great quantity of good flax this year. Buyers are now offering \$1.35 per bushel at country points.

HAY.—Deliveries are increasing and the market is weaker. Fresh baled hay can be bought to-day at 50c per ton less than a week ago and we quote \$7.00 to \$7.50 per ton on track here. Loose hay on the street is also worth \$7.00 to \$7.50 per ton.

BUTTER.—Creamery —Receipts are large and the market seems weaker. Dealers are paying 19½ to 21c per pound at the factory for choice late September or October make according to quality.

BUTTER—Dairy —Shipments are coming forward in fairly large quantities, but there is still a disposition on the part of some country merchants to hold back for higher prices. This policy seldom results in the holder realizing his purpose and is one of the reasons why there is so much bad butter in the market. Rolls and bricks should now begin to come in as the weather is cooler and they can be easily shipped now. Dealers are offering 13 to 15c per pound now for finest dairy grades, less freight and commission. Second qualities are worth 10 to 12c per pound. This is an advance of 1c per pound for finest over a week ago.

CHEESE.—The market is weak at 9 to 9½c per pound delivered here.

EGGS.—Receipts are not so large and the price has stiffened up. Dealers are now offering as much as 2c per dozen over their prices of a week ago. We quote 16c per dozen for strictly fresh eggs in cases delivered at Winnipeg.

VEGETABLES.—Deliveries of potatoes are increasing with the improved roads and fine weather. We quote now: Potatoes, 35 to 40 cents per bushel; rhubarb, 20c per dozen; lettuce, 10c per dozen; parsley, 20c; green onions and radish, 10c per doz.; carrots, 10c, beets, 10c per dozen; turnips, 25c per bus.; cabbage, 25c to 40c per dozen; ripe tomatoes, 2c per lb; imported tomatoes, 50c per basket; green tomatoes, 30c per bushel; celery, 20c per dozen.

DRESSED MEATS.—Beef is plentiful. Hogs are decidedly scarce and the demand is keen. At the abattoir as high as \$1½c is being asked for these. We quote: