

THE BUSINESS SITUATION.

Winnipeg, Saturday, August 7.

Business matters have been moving along in a fairly satisfactory manner. There is some talk about slow collections, which, however, is not an unusual thing, especially at this time of the year, when the farmers have only butter and live stock to dispose of. In most jobbing lines business is reported as good. Jobbers are beginning to ship out fall goods in textile branches. A feature of the trade this week is the first orders for supplies for the Klondyke gold camps, orders for flour and butter having been filled here. If this gold country turns out anything at all equal to reports, it will be a great factor as a consumer of our produce in a short time. What with great mining camps to east of us, mining camps to west of us, and mining camps to north of us, the outlook for the food producers of our prairie region is certainly quite hopeful. We have now a home market on all sides of the prairie food producing belt, and a home market is almost invariably the best market. A decidedly better movement is reported in land sales. The large land corporations report sales greatly in advance of previous years. Bank clearings for July at Winnipeg, as will be seen by the table in another column, have been very largely in excess of previous years. Interest rates hold at 7 to 8 per cent. for ordinary mortgage loans, being usually 7 per cent on city and 8 per cent on farm property. Bank discount rates at the same figures.

WINNIPEG MARKETS.

Winnipeg, Saturday Afternoon, Aug. 7.

AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS, ETC.

Harvesting machinery and supplies are now going out freely. The season's trade in mowers is now about over. Binders and binding twine have been the principal things moving this week, and dealers have been kept busy handling these lines. There is some talk about a probability of a scarcity of binder twine toward the end of the season, but it is of course difficult to say whether or not this is anything more than the usual prediction of this time of year. It is said that as binder twine goes on the free list next year, no one wants to hurry over any stock, hence there is a disposition to keep stocks down to a quantity not likely to be in excess of sales. This is the basis on which predictions of a shortage later on are made. There is a considerable variety of twine in the market, and quotations vary in like proportion. Twine is selling to consumers here at from 5c upward, as to quality and age.

FISH.

Salmon was a little lower, owing to the big catch in British Columbia lately. Halibut are also easier. Shipments of Manitoba whitefish are going forward at frequent intervals to points east and south. Lake Superior trout are scarce this week. Job-

bing prices are as follows: White 5 1-2, pickerel 4c, trout 9c, salmon 12c, kippered goldeyes 80c, doz. Oysters are quoted at 70c for selects in cans. Halibuts 10c per lb.

GROCERIES.

There is some figuring on new dried fruits, but little if any business has been done yet. The talk about a firmer market for canned salmon, on account of a light catch of fish, has flattened out on account of the arrival of such numbers of fish in the British Columbia rivers. New strawberries are offering at easier prices than the last of the old pack.

GREEN FRUITS.

A new line in the market this week is Washington state crabs. They are put up in boxes of about thirty pounds net, or 35 pounds gross weight, and are very fine quality. They come a little higher than the eastern crabs, which will be in the market later on, but it must be remembered that the supply of eastern crabs has usually been unequal to the demand. Last year there were plenty of crabs, but in almost every previous year there was a shortage to meet requirements here. Western apples now offering are better quality than earlier arrivals, but their keeping quality is still somewhat limited. There is still a scarcity of California peaches and plums, but abundance of pears are offering at lower prices. Tomatoes are easier. Our remarks of last week will continue to apply to oranges and lemons. It is impossible to get any number of small sizes in oranges, the variety now in the market having a tendency to run to large sizes, California lemons now in the market are excellent quality. Melons are lower. Blueberries are coming along a little more freely and the price declined to 10c this week. Owing to light receipts so far, it is concluded the crop is short. Prices are as follows: California late Valencia oranges \$6 to \$6.50 box, Messina lemons \$8; bananas per bunch, \$1.75 to \$2.50; California lemons, \$8 a box; pie plants 1 1-2c per lb; tomatoes, \$1.25 per crate of 4 baskets; California plums, \$1.75; California peaches, \$1.75 per box; California Bartlett pears, \$3 to \$3.25 Washington pears, Clapp's favorites, \$3 to \$3.25 box; onions, \$4 per 100 lbs; watermelons, \$4.50 to \$5; Washington crabs, \$1.15 to \$1.25 box; blueberries, 10c lb.

HARDWARE.

There is not a single change to report in this branch this week, in any staple line. Business is good. See quotations on another page.

PAINTS, OILS, ETC.

Trade in this branch is very steady and it is seldom that so long a time elapses without a change in prices of some staples. There is still no change to note in prices this week. See quotations on another page.

TOBACCOS.

The tobacco situation has been the cause of much inconvenience and annoyance to the grocery trade. When the duty was first announced on the raw leaf, manufacturers closed up, as they were not aware as to the exact increase which the new duty would cause in the cost of the goods, owing to some doubt as to the meaning of the clause relating to tobacco. The manufacturers sent deputations to Ottawa, and by the time the matter was defined and understood, considerable time had been lost. By the

time the factories resumed work, stocks in staple lines had been considerably reduced. Tobaccos have to be held for a considerable time at the factories, after their manufacture, to permit of their ripening properly before shipment, as they may mould if shipped too soon. This applies particularly to the chewing qualities. All this caused delay and in the meantime stocks became almost exhausted. In the staple chewing plugs, to retail at 10 cents, which have the principal sale here, the market has been entirely bare and manufacturers have not been able to replenish the demand to any extent. A limited supply of this line is expected in a few days, as word was received that one of the eastern factories would ship some here about July 24, and the goods should soon arrive, and further shipments will doubtless soon follow. The new goods, manufactured since the change in the duties, will be altered in size to meet the higher price, as previously reported in The Commercial, so retail prices will remain the same. Sevens will be changed to eight to the pound, so as to retail as before at 10 cents per plug, notwithstanding the advance in the price, and, other sizes in proportion. None of the new sizes have arrived here yet, but goods on the way will be of the new sizes. Smoking tobaccos have not been so scarce as chewing. Some new size T. & B. is expected the first of the week. They will be 4s instead of 3s as before the change in the duty. Consumers will not likely notice much difference in the size of the ten cent plug, but the new five-cent plug will look pretty small, at sixteen to the pound.

TEXTILE LINES.

Jobbers are now beginning to send out fall goods in clothing and furnishings. Importations and domestic goods are now coming to hand freely, and shipping will be more active a little later on in the month.

GRAIN AND PRODUCE.

WHEAT—The wheat market has been irregular this week and active. Prices were very strong early in the week, reaching the highest point since the advance set in on Wednesday, when No. 1 hard sold at 24 1-2c, about 10c to William. On Monday there were sales at 22c on. On Thursday there was a very sudden and unexpected collapse in the market, Chicago declining 3c during the day. The decline was probably due to a sudden alarm among speculators, owing partly to heavy resales of wheat said to have been previously sold for export. The market was worked up partly on these reports of export sales, and then the wheat was all back again. Yesterday, however, the market was on the whole a strong one, though there was a wide range in prices at Chicago, with sharp advances and as heavy declines. Here wheat sold down to 31 1-2c on the break on Thursday, for No. 1 hard, sales having been made at this figure on Thursday and Friday morning. At the close yesterday there were bids at 32 1-2 to 32 3-4c, but no sellers under 33c. No. 2 hard is held at about 2 1-2c under No. 1 hard, and No. 3 hard 3 1-2 to 4c under No. 2.

FLOUR—The market has been very strong in sympathy with wheat. Large sales of Manitoba flour are reported from eastern Canada markets for domestic and export trade, at advancing prices. Here prices have advanced again this week, some brands being quoted 5c higher, while other