HEAVY WHEAT WEEK

A FRACTIONAL DECLINE IN PRICES AT ALL THE PRINCIPAL POINTS

SHIPMENTS CONTINUE LARGE

Foreign Cables Generally Low—Argentine Crop Said to Have Suffered Damage From Hail—Talk of Manipulation of Prices in Chicago—No Evidence Yet of Replenishment of European Stocks.

The wheat market throughout the week was heavy, and the closing figures on Saturday were lower at all the principal points than the Saturday preceding. The following are the prices for the May option at the dates and in the markets named:

	Dec. 10.	Dec. 3.
Minneapolis	64¾	64⅝
Chicago	65½	66¼
Duluth	64¾	65¼
St. Louis	68⅜	69⅜
New York	70⅝	71⅛

These figures show a decline of ⅝c at Minneapolis, ¾c at Chicago, ½c at Duluth, 1c at St. Louis and ¾c at New York.

The opening Monday was quiet in Chicago, and general stagnation prevailed both there and at Minneapolis. There were reports from New York of increased shipments for export. Cable advices also indicated a considerable movement in the Black sea. Liverpool quotations were lower. The sluggishness continued until Wednesday, when there was a slight rally. Although there appeared to be no abatement in the foreign demand prices did not maintain their strength in the face of weakness reported from Liverpool, and holders with impaired or small margins showed a disposition to realize profits, causing a further decline. There were reports later in the week of unfavorable conditions in Argentina, where it was said much damage had been caused by severe hail storms. The increase in visible supply was reported to be smaller than expected, which gave some support to bears. Rumors were current in Chicago also during the week to the effect that Mr. Armour and others were manipulating the market with a view to widening the spread between the December and May options. A bull argument consisted of reports that, notwithstanding the improved weather conditions for shipping wheat to country elevators in the Northwest, the receipts were approximately two-thirds less than they were three weeks ago, before the snow storm.

There has been good buying of the December option. It is understood that a considerable short interest exists in Chicago, as well as in New York, in this future, as well as in May, and this is a card upon which the bulls are relying. Meanwhile European advices are to the effect that there is no perceptible increase in the accumulation of stocks there. This is an argument which is being made use of by the bulls. It is evident that the great volume of wheat and flour now being exported from this country to Europe is passing into the markets for immediate consumption, and that if there is to be any replenishment of stocks from the United States, as has been intimated by the European trade papers, the export demand will be continuous for a long period to come. Upon this point the following from Broomhall's Liverpool Corn Trade News of Nov. 22 is interesting:

The position on this side of the Atlantic continues satisfactorily strong, and here in Liverpool our stock is so small that shorts hesitate to take liberties with the market by selling December, while the discount at which alone March or May can be placed reduces the temptation to sell these distant positions until the results of the Argentine crop can be definitely gauged. Any real disaster to that market would at once put these months to the level of, possibly to a premium over, December; but so far nothing can be said of the prospects there except that some rain has fallen, and that shippers have taken due care that Europe is informed of the fact. As to America, the Western receipts continue on their late prodigious scale, and though, of course, with the close of navigation, a falling off is certain, they will probably continue heavy until Christmas, and if winter reduce the receipts, it must always be remembered that to an even larger extent it puts an end to the home absorption of wheat and flour. Russia seems disposed to spread her deliveries over a longer period than usual, and with larger receipts at her ports it is not likely that in these days of powerful "ice-breakers" any marked cessation of supplies thence will be seen.

Politics have for the moment ceased to have much active influence on values, but the outlook is still doubtful, and it remains one of the factors in favor of higher values. Millers, however, do not apparently look for any improvement in price in the near future, and the reduction of 6d per sack that they have made today indicates a disappointing demand in this market.

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COMPARATIVE WHEAT RECEIPTS.

Receipts of wheat at winter and spring grain markets for twenty-three weeks, July 1 to Dec. 5, with comparisons in bushels, compiled by the Cincinnati Price Current:

	1898.	1897.	1896.
St. Louis	10,408,000	8,590,000	9,128,000
Toledo	9,117,000	8,190,000	5,847,000
Detroit	2,927,000	3,354,000	2,244,000
Kansas City	19,086,000	21,408,000	5,282,000
Cincinnati	329,000	404,000	625,000
Winter wheat	41,867,000	41,946,000	23,126,000
Chicago	19,837,000	29,057,000	15,502,000
Milwaukee	6,248,000	5,257,000	5,057,000
Minneapolis	38,808,000	41,708,000	36,869,000
Duluth	47,737,000	32,997,000	35,090,000
Spring wheat	112,630,000	109,019,000	92,518,000
Aggregate for 23 weeks	154,497,000	141,965,000	115,644,000
Winter, past wk	1,218,000	930,000	604,000
Spring, past wk	8,464,000	5,652,000	2,274,000
Total, week	9,682,000	6,582,000	2,878,000
Previous week	8,501,000	6,606,000	3,054,000

The total receipts of wheat at primary markets for twenty-three weeks from July 1 to Dec. 5, with comparisons for ten years, are shown in the following:

1898	154,497,000	1893	108,168,000
1897	141,965,000	1892	176,520,000
1896	115,644,000	1891	159,574,000
1895	120,695,000	1890	68,628,000
1894	108,737,000	1889	85,482,000

The receipts of wheat the past week at primary markets compare with the preceding week and corresponding week last year, as compiled by the Cincinnati Price Current, as follows:

	Past Week.	Preceding Week.	Last Year.
St. Louis	386,000	393,000	229,000
Toledo	251,000	180,000	105,000
Detroit	88,000	65,000	49,000
Kansas City	478,000	544,000	531,000
Cincinnati	15,000	16,000	16,000
Chicago	793,000	918,000	976,000
Milwaukee	395,000	381,000	273,000
Minneapolis	2,791,000	2,392,000	2,441,000
Duluth	4,485,000	3,612,000	1,962,000
Totals	9,682,000	8,501,000	6,582,000

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BEERBOHM WHEAT REVIEW.

Beerbohm's London List of Nov. 25 says: A very steady tone has prevailed during the past week, and indeed rather better prices are obtainable for near wheat than at the close of last week, this being of course a direct result of the very short stocks on hand, which show no signs of being replenished this side of Christmas. Most people, it may be said, hold the opinion that lower prices must finally ensue because of the immense production of wheat this year, but very few would venture to predict the exact date of the expected decline, which in fact is being indefinitely postponed. The truth evidently is that the level of price is already moderate enough under the circumstances, and before any one can reasonably expect values to give way there must be reconstitution of the stocks in this country. These stocks in first hands are still the lowest perhaps on record for the time of year.

There is no doubt that the course of the market in the early part of next year will largely depend upon the outturn of Argentina; already there are estimates, mentioned above, of a large surplus for export, but it will probably be impossible to judge with any approach to accuracy before January. Meanwhile, as we have said, there is nothing in view calculated to materially change the present condition of the markets.

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AS TO PRICES OF WHEAT.

America's bumper crop of wheat is being marketed in a quiet way, with prices influenced solely by a legitimate demand. Pyrotechnic attachments are lacking this year, for there is nothing the plunger can use as a lever. European requirements, ostensibly, are not so large as a year ago; nevertheless foreign buying is the main support of the market. This has been helped by a further decline in ocean freights. South Africa has been a buyer, and it is this demand, small though it may be, from those portions of the world where it was not expected, that assists in maintaining prices in this country at the present level.

There does not appear to be any prospect of the foreign demand becoming less, in fact, a New York authority is of the opinion that many European nations issue estimates of ample production for the transparent purpose of securing cheaper wheat, inasmuch as they continue purchasing in this country. Speculators rely upon sensational news to affect prices, but there is very little to be had and the result is that the fluctuations in values are immaterial. The condition of the wheat crop in the Argentine, owing to the surplus that may be raised there for export, is exciting considerable interest, but the reports are so conflicting as to be of no practical value. Corn appears to be maintaining an appearance of strength in the matter of values, and should this continue, wheat prices must be helped somewhat.—Cincinnati Price Current.

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THINK WHEAT TOO LOW.

While we think wheat is too low for the facts, and that our own bread and seed with the wants of the old world will require it all at a good price before the harvest of 1899 is in the market, yet it must be remembered that, owing to our currency basis or some other cause, all prices of agricultural and manufactured products are and for a few years have been abnormally low. Corn, hay, hogs, cotton, steel, nails, hardware, cotton cloths, clothing—nearly everything not affected by a natural shortage (like beef, apples, etc., at present) or a trust, patent or other monopoly—all are abnormally low as compared with the years from 1866 to 1890. Hence, wheat at about 70 cents at interior milling points in Ohio and neighboring states is above the present average of other commodities. And still we think our small visible supply and immense foreign demand indicate something of an advance.—Ohio Farmer, Dec. 8.

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LIVE STOCK MARKETS.

The past week has been active generally at the union stock yards, South St. Paul, though receipts were smaller. There were 234 cars received, against 259 the previous week, being a decrease of 25. The receipts of live stock were: Cattle, 2,404; calves, 661; hogs, 8,063; sheep, 6,923, horses, 2. The week ending Dec. 3 there were received: Cattle, 3,222; calves, 1,256; hogs, 10,231; sheep, 1,836. These figures show a decrease in cattle of 818; in calves, 595; in hogs, 2,168, and an increase in sheep of 5,087.

The killings of Swift & Co. during the week were: Cattle, 836; calves, 11; sheep, 761; hogs, 6,953. The killings of the week previous were: Cattle, 801; calves, 11; sheep, 860; hogs, 8,300. These figures show an increase in cattle of 35; a decrease in sheep of 99; hogs, 1,347, with calves equal.

The quality of cattle in the general run was fair (with some good steers in small lots), which assisted in raising the average grade of butcher stock offering. The demand has been somewhat larger than usual for grades suitable for the lumber and mining camps. This caused a readier sale for canning stock. While prices as a rule were somewhat lower all around, owing to a considerable decline in Chicago, the equivalent was well maintained in favor of this market. There was little demand for stockers and feeders, or for small calves, which were with difficulty disposed of. The weather was not favorable for the handling of these, and they would better have been kept at home.

The hog market was active, and an improvement in prices was realized. Buyers for the packing house did not incline to enter the market very strongly at one period during the week, even at the lower prices prevailing, but a movement suddenly developed which included demands from Armour & Co., which had the effect of sending prices to a higher plane, and the week closed strong.

We quote: Good dry-fed steers, $4.75@5; medium, $4.30@4.60; choice dry-fed cows and heifers, $3.50@4; common, $2.50@3.25; canners, $1.75@2.25; fat bulls, $3@3.50; common, $2.75@2.75; veal calves, choice, $5@5.50; common and heavy, $3.75@4.50; feeders, $2.50@3.75; stockers, choice, $3.40@3.60; common, $3@3.25; off colors, $2.50@2.75; choice steer calves, $3.75@4; fair to good, $3.25@3.50; common and off-colors, $2.50@3; stock cows and heifers, $2.50@3. Milkers and springers are $2.50@5 lower than a week ago. Choice good quality and good size, $35@40; common, $25@30.

Hogs were steady to strong Saturday at Friday's prices: Top, $3.25; bulk, $3.20@3.22½; packers, $2.90; pigs, $2.85.

Sheep were steady at previous week's prices, with very few coming in. Good fat lambs, $4.75@5; fair to good, $4@4.75; good mutton, $3.75@4.25; fair to good, $3@3.75. There is not much demand for feeders, and few coming in.

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MAKE THE CATTLE GOOD.

The coming of the Christmas cattle has emphasized the market spread between the top lots and unfinished cattle. The demand for ripened beeves is good and prices are 30c to 50c per hundred higher than at this time last year on this class. A couple of consignments of Christmas cattle—Aberdeen-Angus as usual—topped the market last week at $5.90, and it is possible that a better price may yet be made. At all events, corn is well sold that is used to finish cattle at the present time. Many are coming to market that lack from thirty to ninety days finishing—a condition seemingly without excuse. Half-fat cattle are in too great supply. The feed-lots are largely filled and demand from that source is slack. A little later a market for stockers to range the fodder fields will likely spring up, but there is little demand for short-fed cattle to be returned to the country for finishing. Marketmen do not supply an explanation of the presence of half-fat cattle in large numbers.

Quality rather than weight is the demand.—Breeders' Gazette.

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HOGS IN CHICAGO MARKET.

Hogs have been coming to market in large numbers. Last week's run was more than 79,000 larger than the preceding week. Three reasons for the free marketing may be mentioned: First, hogs are plentiful; second, disease is active in perhaps more than an average degree, and third, the country has some decided views as to the future price of corn and of hogs. Notwithstanding the huge crops figured out on paper, the farmers believe in a higher price. The enormous exports and the undoubted damage done by prolonged wet weather this fall—of which the government report took no note—combine to give confidence to a better price. On the other hand an impression prevails that the packers have the hog market "pegged" and are determined to prevent an advance. That they control the situation in times of ordinary demand goes without saying. Taken together these three reasons doubtless account in general for a run of hogs that is very noteworthy in numbers.—Breeders' Gazette.

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SHEEP ON FEED.

It is getting very hard to estimate at this season of the year, even approximately, the number of sheep on feed. Formerly, most of the Western sheep were in the hands of big operators at established feeding points, but now small farmers have gone into the business so extensively that there is no telling, except by returns at the market centers, how many sheep are fed. Some, basing their opinions on the supplies at feeding stations, think there are less, but many entertain the opinion that there are more in the aggregate than last year, from the fact that there are so many in small feeders' hands.—Drovers' Journal.

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SOUTH ST. PAUL HORSE MARKET.

Ed W. Wentworth & Co., of the South St. Paul Horse Exchange—We report the horse market as rather dull on all grades except on loggers, and on them the price is considerably lower than early in the fall. We have a large assortment on hand, but don't expect much demand until the spring trade begins.

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MIDWAY HORSE MARKET.

Barrett & Zimmerman's report of trade the past week was characterized as quite active in all classes of horses. The aggregate sales of farm horses are in large excess over any week the last six months. General purpose and driving horses also more looked for. The principal volume of the outgoing stock consisted of logging horses. Logging men were well represented on the market, whose purchases as a rule were limited to small quantities to make up deficiencies in their logging camps. The nominal value of serviceable sound horses from four to eight years, as follows:

Drafters, choice to extra	$90 to	$135
Drafters, common to good	75 to	90
Farm horses, choice to extra	75 to	90
Farm horses, common to good	50 to	70
Drivers, common to good	60 to	100

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CHICAGO HORSE MARKET.

F. J. Berry & Co. say: The volume of receipts have been about the same as for the preceding week, but the tone of the market has been considerably improved, large-sized, stylish drivers of the different classes and choice heavy drafters still leading in demand, but all classes and grades of horses, excepting small stuff, have sold readily at very fair prices. There has been some increase in both foreign and domestic trade lately.

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FRENCH DUTY ON HORSES.

The $10 duty imposed by France on our horses has killed the trade with that country in the medium classes. Some little business is yet doing in the better grades. Big coach horses and omnibus horses are in demand for that country, notwithstanding the duty. Size is demanded. The market has small use for little ones, either for harness work or draft. Ponies are good property—smart, trappy-gaited ponies—but little horses are at a discount. A light horse must have a lot of beauty and speed to give him value. Size and attractive action in a big horse make the winning combination. Signs are not lacking of a revival of interest in the 16.2-hand horse; for harness work the East has preferred them under 16 hands, or at least not rising that height, but real coachy patterns seem to be coming back into favor. This makes it all the harder for the horse-breeder. The difficulty in producing a fine and handsome horse increases with every additional half-inch at the withers. The good big ones are not easily grown, but a judicious use of the coach stallion or the Hackney will produce them. The man who wastes time and money on little "knot-head" stallions that possess no other quality than speed will have his experience for his trouble.—Breeders' Gazette.

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CHICAGO LIVE STOCK.

The receipts of live stock at Chicago last week were cattle, 56,200, against 52,273 the week previous, showing an increase of 3,900. Receipts the same week a year ago were 46,995, showing an increase this year of about 9,000.

Receipts of hogs were 252,000 last week, against 272,741 the same week last year, being a decrease of 20,741. Last year during the same week the receipts were 224,068, or about 29,000 less than the present year.

Receipts of sheep were 70,000 last week, against 70,824 the week previous, being a decrease of 824. Last year they were 61,669, being a decrease of about 8,300.

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ST. PAUL PRODUCE.

The week was marked by a decline of an average of 4c for butter, and this extended proportionately to all grades. The cause is attributed to sales of overstocks in the East at the higher prices, particularly in New York. There has been a very limited call for shipping. The turn is believed to be wholly due to unloading by speculators.

Eggs are steady and in good demand. Receipts of fresh stock have been very light, and the storage eggs are coming forth and meeting a good demand.

Cheese continues firm and in good demand.

Dressed poultry is selling well at good prices. The season is now approaching its height. The spring chicken and turkey markets are particularly active.

Teachers' and Students' Christmas Excursions.

On December 23rd the Wisconsin Central Lines will sell excursion tickets at greatly reduced rates. For particulars call at City Ticket Office, 373 Robert street.

Comfortable Chair.

"I was in a little town on the Southern Pacific the other day," said an expert who is frequently called upon to doctor machinery plants at outlying places, "and happened on an exceedingly curious device. The weather was warm and a very portly old fellow was sitting on a big chair in front of a store. Fixed vertically on each chair-arm was a rapidly revolving palm leaf fan. Presently they stopped, and thereupon the fat man arose. When he sat down again they started up. I walked over and examined the machine and found that the fans were actuated by a system of cogs under the seat. They had a spring which was wound by the weight of the person in the chair. When he got up the seat rose slightly and it was ready for rewinding. The old man told me he bought the thing years ago from a peddler, and it has been a great comfort in summer. I never heard of such a contrivance in my life."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Go South This Winter.

For the present winter season the Louisville & Nashville Railroad Company has improved its already nearly perfect through service of Pullman Vestibuled Sleeping Cars and elegant day coaches from Cincinnati, Louisville, St. Louis and Chicago, to Mobile, New Orleans and the Gulf Coast, Thomasville, Ga., Pensacola, Jacksonville, Tampa, Palm Beach and other points in Florida. Perfect connection will be made with steamer lines for Cuba, Porto Rico, Nassau and West Indian ports. Tourist and home-seekers' excursion tickets on sale at low rates. Write C. P. Atmore, general passenger agent, Louisville, Ky., for particulars.

Dreyfus' Mail.

Hess tells how secret notes were convey to Dreyfus. His linen was washed at the Isle Royale, and the notes were slipped into the wristbands of the shirts, which were unpicked, and then resewed for the purpose.—New York Press.

The Rock of Refuge.

In the Sandwich islands there is a spot called the Rock of Refuge. If the criminal reaches this rock before capture he is safe as long as he remains there. Usually his family supply him with food until he is able to make his escape, but he is never allowed to return to his own tribe.

Jerusalem Church Bells.

The ringing of bells at the new church at Jerusalem is an interesting new departure in Christian worship in Palestine. There are three bells, and the right to use them is one of the minor concessions of the sultan to his friend the kaiser. For over 300 years the use of bells has been forbidden to the Christian churches in the Holy Land.

THROUGH CARS TO CALIFORNIA.

Quick Time—Best Service.

Tourist car running through to Los Angeles leaves Twin Cities every Thursday via "The North-Western Line"—C., St. P., M. & O. Ry.—the Pioneer through car line from the Twin Cities to California, making the following fast time:

Leace Minneapolis 7:10 p. m., St. Paul 7:45 p. m. Thursday, arrive Ogden 1:40 a. m. Sunday, San Francisco 9:45 a. m. Monday, Los Angeles 7:30 a. m. Tuesday.

For tickets at lowest rates and other information call at 413 Nicollet avenue, Minneapolis, and 395 Robert street, St. Paul, or address T. W. Teasdale, general passenger agent, St. Paul.

NEEDLES NOT TRUE

AN ELEMENT OF MYSTERY IN THE WRECKS ON LAKE SUPERIOR

BEDS OF MAGNETIC IRON ORE

They Have a Bad Effect Upon Compasses, and Are Believed to Be Responsible for Many of the Hulks on the Rugged North Shore—All Cargo Records Are Broken During the Past Season.

From the New York Sun.

There is an element of mystery in the many wrecks which occur along the north shore of Lake Superior which gives added interest to the marine skeletons that lie along the rugged coast. In the November and December storms that sweep over the lakes, accompanied by driving sleet or snow, the masters of ships going up to Duluth or from the city toward the Sault try to get under the lee of the north shore. Its wooded banks, often rising sheer from the water for hundreds of feet, and for 200 miles a mass of rock with scarcely a landing place, break the force of the north winds and give protection to the ships. Lake masters are accustomed to sail in part by sight and sound, and not entirely by the compass, like the ocean navigators. They creep up toward where the shore ought to be, sounding their fog whistles all the time, till they get an echo. With the coast thus picked up they steer parallel to it, judging their distance by the intervals between the whistles and the echoes and by the comparative stillness of the water in which they are. The shores are invisible, and the compass is relied on chiefly to give a general direction and guidance. It is a skillful trade, and the risks taken along such a shore as that of rocky Lake Superior are great, but usually the vessel comes sliding into port covered from stem to rudder with white ice, a trifle behind time, perhaps, but ready for another bout with the elements as soon as her cargo is taken out and another put in its place.

But the north shore of the lake, besides being as rugged as that of Greenland, is no straight line. It is a succession of bays and points, the former deep and narrow, the latter running far out and ending in series of islands. Sometimes the islands are emphasized by rock reefs extending still further into the open lake and close enough to the surface to reach any ship unwary enough to come over them. To the captain standing on his bridge, the sleet driven by gale, his exposed face as he listen to the whistle and its distant echo, that echo grows more distant till it almost dies away, and he heads a point or two closer to the shore to take it up again. He knows the bays and reefs, for his charts are before him, and his compass shows him he is safe. Suddenly a darker blackness than the storm looms before him, and before the headway of the ship can be checked materially her keel grinds against the beach or her bow runs check into a sheer ledge of rocks that rises far above his vision.

COMPASS IN ERROR.

How a ship's compass could lead her master astray in such manner has been one of the mysteries of Lake Superior for years. The boat of a man now in Duluth suffered a week ago at a time when he knew his compasses were right. His ship was heading for Duluth, and for safety was two points south of her course, which should have taken her to the entry at Superior, seven miles south from the harbor entrance at Duluth. Without warning the vessel grated on a beach and stopped. An investigation showed her to be on the sand bank at the mouth of Knife river, twenty miles east from Duluth. She was heading directly up the river, almost due north, but the compass still held two points south of the course for Duluth. The boat had, by the charts, turned almost a right angle. Within 125 feet of either side rock reefs ran out into the lake on which she might have cut herself to pieces. To the southerly side, where a trifling less deviation would have taken the vessel, lay an island of rock that would have driven her bow back to her engines and hunched her up into a circle. As it was a tug pulled her off and a survey showed not a dollar of damage. Many such a casualty has occurred from time to time, and the river on which this boat brought up has been the scene of two or three groundings every season for years. Some of them have resulted luckily, others have been total losses. The only explanation for these groundings and deviations, according to shipmasters here, is that a great bed of magnetic iron sand lies in the bed of the stream covered by the washings of quartz sand from the rocks of the lake.

The same explanation may account for the recent disasters at other points on the north shore. Indeed, at a gathering of vessel captains in an agent's office recently they were discussing the remarkable aberrations of compasses this fall, which every man had noticed far more than in any previous year. During the week one of the captains of the great Wilson fleet, a man noted as the best and most careful skipper in this line, who has not cost his company a cent for repairs in years, found himself on the north shore and three points off his course. He got off without much loss, but the fact was none the less remarkable. How did he get there, and what causes the deviation? There have been probably a score of strandings that have not been reported and have happily resulted in no loss, but are utterly unexplainable. Every captain in the group the other day agreed that there had been a deviation this fall which had not been noticed during the summer nor ever before, and none could explain it. The compasses seemed to be wild.

MAGNETIC ORE.

Every river that flows into Lake Superior from the north between Duluth and the international boundary has its source in hills that are more or less filled with magnetic iron ore. The sands from these ores are borne on the swift mountain currents to the lake and settle there, and their influence is felt fifty to seventy-five miles out to sea, it is asserted. This is the only explanation the skippers give for the disasters on Lake Superior, but it has never been proved correct. What gives a more decided offset to the needle in the late fall, at the very time when it is most depended on, is one of the deep mysteries of a lake that has many mysteries. But that such is a fact every lake captain will assert.

An unusual feature of the year has been the number of heavy losses of the "touch and go" variety, cases where some steel ship has found the bottom or some rock in a place where a rock or the bottom was never discovered before. These steel ships weigh 3,000 tons or so, and they have loads from 4,000 to 6,000 tons more, and, when they hit something, no matter how softly, there is a crash. These little losses have cost from $1,500 to $40,000 each, and there have been scores of them this season.

A good many well-known names have disappeared from the lakes this year. Fifty ships have been taken to the ocean during the past two months, something that is new to lake vessel men, for there has never been an Atlantic demand for lake-built boats before. It is quite likely that some of the fifty will not come back, for they are not of a construction to stand the rack of the ocean very many years. The drain to the ocean has taken from the lakes tonnage capable of carrying about 3,000,000 tons of freight in a season, and, with the losses of the year, they make a hole in capacity that cannot be filled by the shipyards in one year, at any rate. It is not beyond the truth to say that, with the expected growth of freight pressing for shipment. East next year, there will be a famine of ships, and rates will be very much higher than in the past year. This famine may be a most serious matter to the iron miners and the grain growers of the Northwest, and to the coal consumers who get their supplies from the mines of Pennsylvania and Ohio.

CARGO RECORDS.

Every record of carrying has been smashed time and again during the year. Early in the season the steel freighter Andrew Carnegie put the broom at her masthead, with a cargo of 230,000 bushels of corn, or 6,440 tons, and the schooner Polynesia led her class with 5,729 tons of ore. Soon there came the magnificent steamer Linn, with cargoes of 6,314 tons of ore and 6,496 tons of corn, and the immense wood schooner Australia, sister to the Polynesia, carried 6,316 tons of wheat. A little later the Superior City was launched and took the lead at once with loads of 7,463 tons of corn and 7,562 tons of ore. Then came the schooner John Fritz, which carried out of Duluth 7,795 tons of ore, and her sister, the John A. Roebling, took 7,865 tons. The Superior City still holds the broom for ships of her class, and the Roebling for schooners. The steamer Morse, twenty-five feet longer than the Superior City, has not carried so large a load and is not intended to do so, having other functions that her builders deem more important. All these ships are of what is known as the 400-foot class, the Morse being 475 long and the Carnegie, the shortest steamer of the lot, 420. A cargo was carried by the Mohawk that was valued at $500,000, being the most costly taken on the lakes for many a day. It was all copper and flour. The 7,562 tons of ore carried in one load by the Superior City was discharged in twelve hours, 143 men being engaged in the labor. The Carnegie took 332,100 bushels of oats at a load, almost an elevator full. More than 18,000 tons were moved in one tow by one engine, at a low cost never before approached.

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AN ARCTIC PATH.

Plan to Reach the North Pole by Icebreakers.

From the New York Tribune.

Admiral Makaroff, the well-known explorer of the North Pacific, has lately made the proposal to reach the North pole by means of powerful ice breakers. The proposal sounds rather strange at first, but the Russian admiral bases it on sound scientific reasoning and a good deal of actual experience.

Ice breakers have been used in Russia (at Cronstadt) since 1864, and lately great progress was achieved in their construction in America by arming such vessels with two screws at the stern and a third one at the stem. The American ice breaker Ste. Marie, 3,600 horse power, easily sails through ice two and one-half feet thick, and pierces ice walls fifteen feet high. Still more powerful ice breakers have lately been built in America, and in this country (England) for the Trans-Siberian railway and the port of Vladivostok. Taking into account that, according to Nansen, the ice walls (toroses) in the Arctic basin seldom attain the height of twenty-five feet, and that the Polar sea is free from ice over at least one third of its surface, while all the ice is weakened in summer by thawing, and especially by interior canals, due to accumulations of salt, and by crevices, Admiral Makaroff concludes that an ice-breaking steamer of 20,000 horse power would overcome all the difficulties which polar ice may oppose to her progress.

The distance between the latitude of 78 degrees north to the pole being 720 miles, he calculates the various speeds at which such a steamer could make her way through the ice of various thicknesses from four to seven feet, and he finds that the total distance could be covered in twelve days. Moreever, instead of one ice breaker of 20,000 horse power, it would be advantageous to have two such vessels of 10,000 horse power each, it having lately been proved by actual experiment in Russia that two ice breakers, placed one behind the other, and the rear one pushing the front one by means of a special wooden frame, act as effectively as one single ice breaker of a double force. Admiral Makaroff's proposal is, therefore, to build two special ice breakers of 6,000 tons and 10,000 horse power each, provided with stern screws, and to force a way through the ice to the pole.

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