

Wheat Prices in Britain.

The London *Miller*, of May 1, reviews the wheat markets during April as follows: "The month's trade began late, as the Easter holidays were coincident with the first three days of April. On the 5th, at Liverpool, Californian wheat sold at 5s 10d and red winter at 5s 8d per cwt. The cheapness of Californian in proportion to red winter was remarkable. On the 6th Bristol, Birmingham and Manchester were 6d per quarter dearer for wheat, both English and foreign. On the 7th Calcutta wheat in London made 2s 6d per quarter. At Liverpool Californian advanced 1d per cwt, and made 5s 11d. On the 8th there was a rise on English wheat at Berwick, Bedford, Cambridge, Canterbury, Doncaster, Gloucester, York, Leicester, Newcastle, Norwich, Northampton, Oxford, Peterborough, Taunton, Shrewsbury, Wisbech and Reading, a list worth quoting as showing that no important district remained outside the forward movement. London on the 10th was 6d dearer on the 14 days for both wheat and flour. On the 12th Californian made 5s per cwt at Liverpool, and red winter made 5s 10d. On the 13th Bristol and Birmingham were again 6d dearer, but good arrivals of foreign flour stopped all rise at Manchester. On the 14th 6s 1d was made for Californian wheat at Liverpool. The imperial average, on the 15th was disappointing in only showing a penny improvement where 6d had been expected. On the 17th Mark Lane was 6d dearer, but on the 18th both Liverpool and Hull quoted lower rates, the pressure to sell at the slight advance since the end of March having become too serious to be resisted. On the 20th there was a loss of 6d at Bristol and Birmingham, but the country markets on the 22nd showed 7d advance on the week, English and foreign wheat from this date to the end of the month taking a somewhat divergent course. The London market of the 24th was firm for English and Canadian wheat, but flat for other descriptions. Calcutta wheat made 2s 9d per qr. On the 25th Liverpool was firm for Californian wheat at 6s 1d per cwt, but weak for red winter, for which 5s 9d was accepted. These prices were not further modified during the last few days of the month's trade.

April will be remembered for drought and sunshine, small supplies of foreign wheat and excessive offerings of foreign flour. Crop prospects have not improved in England, but cannot definitely be said to have sustained any irreparable injury. In France, Italy and the Iberian peninsula, where growth is more forward, the drought has probably reduced the possibilities of yield, yet even from these countries farther and fuller advices are to be awaited by the prudent. Heavy snow and rainfalls in Russia, Roumania, and even as far south as Athens, was considered to have assured a most important wheat producing area against want of moisture to sustain the plant during the always hot months of May and June. Thus, an over-average crop is regarded as likely in all these districts.

May with warm rains, and plenty of them, will probably take the heart out of the firmest markets. May with a continuation of April drought will probably give heart to all but the weakest of holders. Between these points is what may be termed an open country, but the control of May markets really rests with the weather. Imports are likely to be an influence against holders; we cannot hope that much less than 1,000,000 qrs. of foreign wheat will be landed. Shipments from India, Russia, Persia and Chili are likely to increase, and those from Australia will begin to be supplemented by New Zealand shipments. Thus provision is made for a considerable reduction in what is coming from either seaboard of the United States, and by the end of May the sickle will be in the winter wheat fields of Texas.

The Coffee Question.

There is actually, writes a Paris correspondent, a "coffee question" in France. The French, or some of them, have become suspicious concerning the properties of that beverage, in the preparation of which they are certainly unrivalled. Just as English people have reached perfection in the brewing of tea, the French are consummate artists in their dealings with coffee. The English, who try to imitate them in this, and who are not familiar with the ways of the country, almost invariably blunder. They make the discovery that chicory is used in *café au lait*, and they conclude that the success of all French coffee, however drunk, lies in the judicious mixture of this root. The *café noir*, however, which is drunk after meals, is pure coffee, made very strong; at all events, it should be so. Then there is an art in roasting, and much motive in keeping the berries from the fire until a short time before they are required. That the French should have become great coffee drinkers is the natural consequence of their own skill in preparing the beverage. They take it for their first breakfast, they take it after their midday meal, and again at night. Black coffee, strong as it should be, has a powerful influence upon the nervous system, which is not moderated by the addition of spirit drunk with it or immediately afterwards. M. Zola has been prevailed upon to say something about coffee. He tells us that for twenty years he has ceased to drink it, and that, although he takes a little now, it agrees badly with his nerves. He long ago gave up wine entirely and took to tea. He confesses that he is a "great drinker" of this beverage. M. Clemenceau is another; tea is the only filipp he believes in when the brain wants sharpening.

The use of so insidious and demoralizing a plant may explain to the French much that they consider perfidious in British diplomacy. Before we come to the end of this discussion we must be ready to read in some Paris paper that Mr. Gladstone's recollections of promises made out of office has become obscured by the fumes of the teapot which he always keeps within reach. French journalists are always entertaining when they get hold of a subject like this, which exercises their brilliant faculty of inductive reasoning.—Exchange.

California Fruit Crop.

Some California canners send word this way to the effect that the fruit crops are not looking well. The first law of nature may account for that in some degree. It usually does. Those canners also attach considerable weight to the probable extraordinary condition of fruit in the green state in Chicago and vicinity during the World's Fair. In this also their imagination is suggestive of a high regard for self-interest. Stated in other words, the Californians are extremely "bullish" verbally, in private letters and in the columns of various publications issued in the Golden State. It would seem fair to presume that they intend to convey the impression that 1893 season pack of fruit is worth as many cents per dozen as the factory as the fruit of 1892 season pack is selling at in New York and other distributive points at the present time. Possibly they are right, not only in their ideas of intrinsic value of spot goods, but as regards prospects for the future. It is no secret, however, that tales similar to those that have been in circulation during the past few weeks were going the rounds a year ago. It is the plain unvarnished fact that enough fruit was gathered to supply a heavy demand from the green fruit trade; that canners secured enough stock to enable them to make a very heavy pack; that driers obtained about all that they could handle to advantage, and that there is still a great deal of California fruit of the pack of 1892 still unsold. In the latter respect dried peaches and "standard" canned peaches and pears are conspicuously prominent. Low prices have helped along the sale of the goods latter-

ly, and may do more in the same connection later on, but it is doubtful if premature advices of alleged shortage in the growing crops will carry much weight against the experience with the last crop and the supply left over after an apparently heavy home consumption, and energetic work in the direction of increasing the outlet in European markets. Doubtless the market needs a stimulant in the way of larger consumption, and would probably benefit therefrom; but at the moment excessive supplies of the canned fruit neutralize the short crop stories, and most lines of goods can be purchased at prices very close to those at which "sacrificed" sales were made a short time ago.—N. Y. *Bulletin*.

A Retired Grocer's Reflections.

Much has been written upon the subject of adulterations, and many investigations have been made with the result of demonstration that nearly every article we eat or drink is adulterated, in many cases with ingredients very prejudicial to human health. Somebody has written a book to inform people "How to detect adulterations in our daily food and drink," and, although the book says that it gives instructions for the employment of "simple means" of detection, the means suggested are in many cases highly impracticable, and in some instances dangerous. Thus the person who sets about the discovery of some supposed evil may, by error or accident—the upsetting of a bottle of sulphuric acid or a receiver of gas—do more injury in an hour than can be rectified in a life time.

The butcher cannot adulterate the beef and mutton, but he can send home short weight, and the baker besides putting alum in the bread to make it white and retain water, can send home deficient weight; the same with the grocer and coal dealer; the dry goods man can slip his scissors on the wrong side of the finger and make a yard contain thirty-three inches. The writer does not mean to say that they do this, nor does he mean to say they don't. The argument is that people ought to possess the means of ascertaining who among storekeepers are honest and who are not; then the just would meet with justice and the unjust would suffer for their own sins.

But much of the responsibility rests with the consumer. Many persons, whose time is of no value, will walk several blocks to save a cent, and the public must learn the fact that there is a difference between cheapness and lowness of price; an article can be low in price, yet by no manner of means be cheap. The cities and manufacturing centres are overrun with all kinds of goods made up to attract the eye, and purchasable wholesale at ruinously low figures, and the temptation to deal in inferior articles is almost overpowering.

The storekeeper, however, who sets out on the conscientious principle of keeping no article whatever but those of good quality, is certain, by holding on in his course, of at length establishing an extensive business and most likely an ample fortune. In this, as in everything else, "honesty is the best policy."

The writer's advice to young men entering into business is to try and gain a name for keeping good goods, carefully selected from reliable jobbers. Perhaps he may see his competitor following a different plan with some apparent success, but his system has a bad foundation, and in the end such dealers are generally left behind. The most satisfactory principle for buyer and seller is for the storekeeper to put a certain profit on everything he sells, and in this case there is a regularity which secures the confidence of his customer and forms the basis of good business.—W. C., in *Merchants Review*.

The annual meeting of the Canadian Colored Cotton company was held here yesterday. The statement showed that after paying a six per cent dividend and all expenses, \$125,000 had been carried forward.