

ally conceded that the season's pack has been a favorable one to them; values for the greater part of the season continuing very low. Sales have taken place during the week at \$3.40 to \$3.50 per cwt. in car lot; for choice bright basons; mixed packers making from \$5.25 to \$5.35 per cwt. in car lots, with the usual advance on small and single lots.

Lambs and dressed beef have fallen off from the advance noted in our last report, mild weather and heavy receipts of live stock keeping prices down, the clearance effected in the latter market not having as yet had any material effect on the dead meat market.

The hide and skin market has a weaker tendency, and a decline is shortly expected from the recent advance; quotations unchanged.

Chatty Stock Letter from Chicago.

(BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

Top prices at present, with comparisons:

Present Two Weeks				
CATTLE.	prices.	ago.	1895.	1894.
1500 lbs. up.....	\$4.75	\$4.75	\$5.60	\$5.20
1350 @ 1500.....	4.70	4.90	5.60	4.85
1200 @ 1350.....	4.55	4.65	5.20	4.65
1050 @ 1200.....	4.35	4.40	4.75	4.10
900 @ 1050.....	4.20	4.30	4.50	3.80
Stks. and F.....	4.00	3.85	3.75	3.70
Fat cows.....	3.75	4.00	4.30	4.50
Canners.....	2.40	2.40	2.20	2.40
Bulls.....	3.50	3.65	4.50	4.00
Calves.....	6.25	6.50	5.50	6.25
Texas steers.....	3.70	4.25	4.40	4.10
Texas C. & B.....	3.25	3.25	3.50	2.35
Hogs.....				
Mixed.....	4.32	4.20	4.35	5.50
Heavy.....	4.35	4.20	4.45	5.50
Light.....	4.30	4.20	4.20	5.40
Pigs.....	4.25	4.10	4.00	5.30
SHEEP.				
Natives.....	3.70	3.75	4.35	4.25
Western.....	3.60	3.61	4.10	3.95
Lambs.....	4.80	4.85	5.00	4.75

Cattle men do not expect higher prices for a while.

Hog men are generally very bullish.

Sheep dealers anticipate stronger prices for light but not for heavy sheep.

A dispatch from Fort Worth, Texas, says: "A. J. Thompson, of Toronto, Ont., has recently purchased 400 head of choice beef cattle at Alvarado, and will ship them direct to England by the way of New Orleans. This is the first heavy shipment from Texas to England, and will mark an epoch in the live stock history of the country." The cattle were fed on cotton seed meal, and are said to be of very good quality, averaging about 1,300 lbs.

The new Texas quarantine regulations are causing a lot of trouble. The State of Texas disagreed with the Secretary of Agriculture as to where the line should be, and the latter has shown his authority by putting the entire State of Texas under quarantine. The result of this will be to prevent Montana and other Northern range cattle men from buying young cattle in the northern part of Texas, Oklahoma, and the Indian Territory. Furthermore, the cattle in these regions cannot be sent down where the cottonseed meal is made, because they would contract fever as readily as the so-called "native" or northern cattle. If the new order is allowed to stand there will soon be a big shortage of cattle in Montana and the Dakotas.

Among the consignments of cattle received here recently was a train load of 15 cars of California cattle, shipped from Sacramento by C. Swanson & Son. They were shipped through Omaha, and came about 2,400 miles. In the lot were 350 head, averaging 1,148 lbs., and they sold to Swift at \$3.55. The freight on the 15 cars amounted to \$1,383.73, and after all expenses were paid they netted about \$30 per head, or \$9,832.87. The shippers said they could not ship so far at a profit, and thought it would have taken \$3.75 to equal home prices. The trouble is the Coast demand as yet is too small to take very large numbers.

A well-posted cattle man writes: "The supply of cattle for January was about the same as a year ago, but more Texans than usual arrived, so that the supply of natives was really the smallest in several years. We think that this decrease will be more apparent this month, and will soon reach the point where the scarcity will create a greater competition among buyers. It looks as if there was a tendency among farmers to feed to a better finish, and we hope this is the case, for good cattle are always easiest to sell.

Big, heavy cattle have lately been quite plentiful, and have sold at a disadvantage compared with light weights. The cheap feed is bound to make big cattle sell less readily than tidy, fat baby heavies.

The provision stocks announced showing an increase in pork of 40,000 bbls., and an increase in lard of 32,000 tcs., had a bearish influence on the hog market. The packers who, with one exception, have been "wrong" on the provision market have been busy lately manufacturing as much mess pork as possible. They can only make contraband pork until the end of March, but can make ribs and other cuts any month.

A lot of 245 Mexican yearling sheep, averaging 87 lbs., sold at \$1.10. Sheep are coming quite heavy in weight. Feeders are holding to use the large supply of cheap feed, also to give the market a chance to mend. A lot of 99 clipped native sheep arrived one day lately. They averaged 101 lbs., and sold for \$3.25. It was a pretty chilly day for sheep with no clothes on.

A lot of 128-lb. native sheep of choice quality sold to an exporter at \$3.80. For several weeks exporters of sheep alive have been practically out of the business, but a recent advance in the British markets, it is thought, will stimulate the trade considerably. So many sheep from South America are going to English markets that there is not so much room this year for our sheep, and the ten-day limit requires that the sheep should be much better in quality than in the past.

Average weight of hogs received at Chicago last month, 236 lbs., against 213 lbs. for December, 223 lbs. for January, 1895, and 251 lbs. for January, 1894.

Last month Chicago received 237,763 cattle, 707,692 hogs, and 293,903 sheep, and shipped 73,852 cattle, 150,227 hogs, and 24,261 sheep.

February receipts of hogs at Chicago for five years past ranged from 335,477 to 933,575, or an average of 670,000. Receipts for February, 1896, are estimated from 425,000 to 550,000. Really good horses are quite scarce in all of the markets. A consignment of select drivers sold here at auction from \$300 to \$500, nearly the entire lot being secured by foreign dealers for the export trade.

Toronto Horse Market.

Probably one of the best shipments of draught horses that has left Canada was exported by Mr. John Sheridan. There were in all 51—mostly Clydesdale grades, about 1,500 lbs. They are consigned direct to London, via Boston, by the S. S. British Queen, and are due at Mr. Rhyll's Horse Repository, Barbican, London, on the 27th February. A further consignment will be forwarded in two weeks, and a few 1,500-lb. to 1,600-lb. horses wanted. They must be sound, on short legs, with good feet; not too much hair on their legs. There seems to be a decided improvement in the horse trade; dealers are buying freely, and although the prices are not high there is every indication that in the near future they will go better, as buyers are operating earlier in the season than usual. Two carloads were shipped from Grand's Repository last Tuesday for the Old Country—one load to Montreal, the other direct to Glasgow; they were mostly workers and fast drivers. The sale of Hackneys last week, from the Northwest, ranged from \$50 to \$105, which must be considered fair, as many of the animals were in poor condition and the weather inclement, and, also, that the season is too early to get good prices. We quote a few sales: Draught horses, 1,350-lb. to 1,600-lb., \$65; general purpose, 1,150-lb., \$55 to \$75; drivers, 15 to 15.3 hands, \$80 to \$100; carriage horses, 15.3 to 16 hands, \$100 to \$150. Messrs. Silver & Smith have dissolved partnership, Mr. Silver retiring.



THE COMUDI.

AN ADVENTURE IN GUIANA.

Garth and I got our holiday at the same time, and, shaking off the dust of Georgetown and civilization, we went out together into the wilds. When we came back again he was laden with spoils for his cherished botanical and zoological collection, and I had gained some experiences that were distinctly new to me.

The extent of Garth's holiday and mine did not admit of far roaming. We had to be content with hiring a large bateau, with four lusty negroes to paddle it, and going just as far up the Essequibo River as our tether of time would let us. That was not very far, for we spent a large part of our allotted time in exploring every promising-looking creek that we passed, and wherever it was practicable we left the bateau and dived into the forest with our guns.

One evening at sundown we camped on a tiny savannah on the side of the very prettiest creek we had yet paddled up—a creek which seemed to present at every bend a different variety of tropical scenery and the best sample of that variety.

We hung our hammocks up in a clump of graceful bamboos, lit a fire, and presently had supper. Garth, who had got a touch of fever on him, declined supper, dozed himself with quinine and retired to his hammock, where he lay tossing and growling. Garth's noble rage for collecting the carcasses of beasts, birds, and plants was tempered by a tendency to take fever whenever it was there to be taken.

Around the dying fire the negro boatmen laughed and chatted boisterously among themselves. I, having no one to talk to, and nothing to do, followed Garth's example and got into my hammock. Presently I fell fast asleep.

When I awoke the bright tropical noon was riding high in the heavens. Under its rays the little savannah looked exactly like an English park that had mysteriously found its way into the midst of a South American forest. I felt too wide-awake to go to sleep again.

I slipped out of my hammock and strolled down to the water's edge.

On the opposite side of the creek the trees and bushes formed a towering, seemingly impenetrable mass of foliage, festooned with gay bignoniads and flaming orange noranteas, and with flowering orchids of all kinds that in the daytime made an embroidery of glowing colors on the background of living green. The moonlight had stolen the glow from the flowers and foliage, it is true, and the now looked somewhat anemic in its pale rays. But they had assumed, as an offset, an air of delicate spirituality. The whole scene, with its subdued white light, its undecided tints, its graces of dimly revealed form, made me feel that I was in real fairyland where the life of nature and the fairies is attuned to a faint minor key.

I felt tingling with life and energy and unrest. It suddenly became to me an all-important thing to be off by myself and see what lay behind the next bend of the creek.

In another minute I was in the bateau and paddling contentedly up stream. Those I left in our little camp slept steadily on.

The next bend of the creek, and the next, and the next, and a good many more we passed, and still I had not sated my curiosity as to what lay behind the point I had last reached. Presently the creek broadened out into a small lagoon. On one side of the lagoon was a low stretch of ground covered with long gleaming grass, chiefly razor grass. Tall, graceful lily palms were dotted over this ground, which stunted wallaba trees and moco-mocos and prickly soweri palms sufficiently proclaimed to be swamp.

I felt like swimming in the swamp when the bateau ran on a nasty snag, and, after vainly exhausting all lesser efforts to get it off, I had at last to take my weight out of the boat. Standing above my knees in water on an insecure footing of fibrous roots, I tugged and pushed at the bateau until, finally, with one herculean shove I got it off the snag.

But I had overdone the thing. My herculean shove had sent me sprawling right into the lagoon, and I was floundering on my face in the water, hugging the snag tightly with both arms. I scrambled to my feet and ruefully realized the situation.

I could see that the bateau had already got into deep water and was drifting with the current back into the creek. I could not go after it, for, apart from the question of alligators, the evil destiny which had arranged things that I had never learned to swim, I breathed a fervent wish that the boat might not drift past our camping place unobserved, and then I had to turn my attention to myself, for I was gradually sinking deeper in the water.

I lost no time in scrambling on to the swamp. It seemed to me that more water than any I had ever seen was the composition of this swamp. There was no stable footing anywhere except the foliage of the trees, and I tried to prove my position by climbing one of a little group of wallabas that grew near the edge of the swamp. There I found a surprisingly comfortable seat, with a back, too-formed by the fork of two queerly twisted branches. My tree and its neighbors evidently lived unhappily on this spot, for they were stunted and gnarled and had a melancholy look of decay.

I was awakened, like my situation, were certainly rather depressing, but I can hardly say I felt depressed. My temperament is sanguine—to an irrational degree, friends tell me—and I didn't doubt that things would turn out as I wanted them to. I was possessed of a comfortable, though ill-grounded, conviction that some one would be opportunely awake in our camp as the bateau was drifting past, would secure the boat, discover my absence, and, understanding generally what had happened, paddle off at once to my rescue.

Despite my dripping garments, I was pleasantly warm, and, though I knew that fever microbes were swarming up in their greedy millions from the swamp, it gave me no concern; fever microbes had always treated me hitherto as a privileged person. I grew drowsy and ended by falling asleep.

The moon was still shining brightly, but there were no signs of my rescuers. Was it possible that the boat had drifted past the camp unobserved?

I was really about to consider the serious bearings of this question when something stirred on the tree nearest to me. I turned my head to see what bird this something was. Then I had no thoughts for anything else.

There, facing me, with its huge body loosely coiled round the neighboring wallaba, was a huge water-bow, or Comudi snake.

The foliage of the tree was too scanty to obscure the moonlight, and I instantly recognized what the creature was, for, only a few days before, Garth and I had had an unsuccessful shot at a Comudi sunning itself on a log on the river bank.

I had heard a great deal about Comudi snakes, more than it was agreeable to recollect just then.

My neighbor, with a g-n-tle, undulatory motion of his head, looked at me. I looked at him. I am absolutely certain that he must have derived more pleasure from that interchange of looks than I did. A cold perspiration broke out upon me.

Here at least was a situation in which it was impossible for me to believe that things would turn out as I wished. I could not fight nor could I run away on that swamp. I was weaponless, helpless, and I quite understood that the boa would not refrain from taking advantage of my helplessness. If he were gorged with food, no doubt he would exercise a passive courtesy and leave me unmolested; but he was very evidently not gorged with food. He looked hungry.

I had an irresistible conviction that it was my destiny to serve him for a late supper. It gave me a very queer sensation to look at his rather lean girth and think that, in a short time, I should be making him bulge out to an unseemly extent. The thought was humiliating, too. A much more dignified ending to my strong young life would have been even an attack of Yellow Jack and a grave in the Georgetown cemetery.

Following this thought came the sudden remembrance of one of the many fearful little regrets which my mother had expressed when I was leaving her and England to try my fortunes in Demerara. It was to the effect that, "if anything should happen" to me out there, she would be denied the sad consolation of tending my grave and weeping over it.

The idea of my dear mother wishing to shed tears and flowers on my grave struck me as exquisitely funny, in view of what that grave was going to be. I could not fancy an anaconda lending itself easily to be wept over. I burst into a loud fit of laughter, though I was certainly far from feeling mirthful.

Thoughts move quickly, and not more than half a minute had elapsed between my first sighting the serpent and my burst of laughter. I had never taken my eyes off him for a second, and now, when I let out my mirthless cackle, I saw that he suddenly stopped the gentle movement of his head and shrank back a little as if daunted by the sound.

A wild gleam of hope lit up the situation for me. Might it not be possible by noisy demonstrations on my part to frighten him away, or at least to deter him from attacking me? With daylight—surely with daylight—help must come. If not from Garth and the boatmen, then from the Indians. There were Indians living on that creek, I knew, and at daylight some would surely be about in their canoes. If I could only keep the Comudi at bay till then!

Thereupon, I began making violent gestures with my arms, and I emitted a series of blood-curdling yells which I think even Fuzzy Wuzzy, in his home in the Soudan, could scarcely have bettered. The Comudi did not unwind his tail and flee. But he was evidently impressed by these demonstrations—strongly impressed. They seemed to take the keen edge off his appetite. No doubt he wanted his supper very badly, but, as there seemed to be something in it he didn't quite understand, he evidently decided to inspect it a little longer before making his assault.

So he continued to inspect me with cold, glittering eyes, while I tried, by converting my arms into windmills, every now and then, and yelling at the top of my voice, to make him afraid of attacking me. My tactics were so far successful, but the anaconda was not to be frightened off the field. He seemed to know instinctively that my powers were limited and his position secure. With some of his great black and yellow coils embracing the tree, and the rest reposing gracefully among the branches, he looked very much at home—as I dare say he was.

How slowly the time passed! I suppose the Comudi, having, seemingly, no pressing engagement elsewhere, didn't find it very tedious waiting till the supper he had in view should cool down enough to let him begin upon it, but I shall never forget the long, torturing suspense that waiting meant. Every moment I was expecting him to overcome his doubts of me and make the fatal spring; and I kept an unwinking watch upon him, with my nerves strung up to an almost unbearable degree of tension. Then, as time went on, the violence of my demonstrations to keep the Comudi in awe began to exhaust me physically. I grew hopeless of escaping those cruel jaws, though I was doggedly determined to show fight to the end.

My thoughts would conjure up all the horrible details of that end, and dwell on them with an odd fascination. Sooner or later my vigilance must relax, and then the watchful serpent would seize his opportunity and hurl himself through the air upon me. I would feel his sharp teeth piercing my flesh. Then I would know myself involved in the cold, scaly coils of his body, and feel the pressing tighter and tighter till my ribs cracked and suffocation began. And then—well, I hoped I should be dead before he began swallowing me. It seemed rather absurd that at that moment I should have felt a sort of flinching disgust at the idea of being passed through the process of deglutition, but I did.

The dreadful time passed somehow, and the morning found me a ghastly-looking object, I make no doubt—still perched on the wallaba, desperately watching my neighbor on the other tree. My body ached with fatigue, the wild motions I still made with my arms from time to time were purely mechanical, my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth. I seemed to be almost past thinking or feeling about what was going to happen to me.

As the sun rose the Comudi began, by his restlessness, to plainly express his indignation at having his supper merged in his breakfast in this fashion. I had seen that latterly my attempts to intimidate him were losing their effect, and I knew that the end was at hand. I did not seem to care. Yet, all the same, I got out my pocket-knife and opened it. I think I meant to try to do something with it, if the Comudi wasn't too quick for me.

I waited, making no further attempt to delay the Comudi's fatal spring. It seemed to me that I waited long before it came; but perhaps I was mistaken.

There was a slight noise, and I had a blurred vision of something darting toward me.

Instinctively I leaned forward and threw out the hand which held the knife. At the same instant I felt myself encircled by the huge body of the anaconda.

The touch of the reptile seemed to galvanize me into fresh life. I looked and saw what I had escaped by my sudden, unthinking change of position. The boa's powerful jaws were nearly closed in the wood of the wallaba, exactly at the spot where my head had been resting the instant before.

I remembered that the peculiar formation of the teeth of boas makes it difficult for them to let go what they have once seized with their mouths, and I simultaneously divined my advantage. Bringing my free right hand with the knife into play, I struck repeatedly at the Comudi's massive coils, devoutly trusting to reach some vital part.

I was sitting in the fork of two branches which were both included in the Comudi's embrace, and, as the pressure of his powerful muscles were first expended on those, I had not felt it as yet. But now I heard the slighter branch crack, and immediately afterward I felt the terrible convolutions tightening round me.

I was sure all was over, but, actuated by a blind instinct of revenge rather than by a hope of setting myself free, I again and again drove my knife up to the handle into the encircling folds. The last time it broke, but it had done its work.

The Comudi's great coils, with blood spurting out of some of them, spasmodically unwound themselves and fell limply down. But, as his teeth were still buried in the wood of the tree, a big length of him remained hanging plumb with the wallaba, while the rest—a good twenty feet—trailed on the ground. A violent tremor ran through him from head to tail, and then he hung motionless. He was dead.

If I had been a woman I suppose I should have fainted then. As it was I sat quite still, staring stupidly at the dead Comudi. Now and then I put out my hand timidly, like a child, and touched the still flexible carcass.

After a time I heard the sound of paddles. I looked round slowly, and there was an Indian in a large wood-skin paddling down the stream. I hailed him with a rather feeble croak.

He paddled quickly toward me, stared blankly at me and the pendant, blood-stained Comudi, and said, "Huh!" He did not seem to quite take in the situation.

He could not speak English, and I could not speak Maecui. But the language of signs is universal, and in a very short time