

### The Tea Trade.

The New York Commercial Bulletin gives the following account of the tea trade in that city:—

Commencing the season with a feeling of considerable confidence, yet professing no inflated or buoyant expectations, local operators in tea have, by conservative methods, secured and maintained a healthy market. The auction room was not resorted to as a sluice-way to continually dump large quantities of stock at unpropitious periods, with the natural demoralizing effect upon prices; but on the contrary importers succeeded in infusing buyers with a good measure of their own faith, and the result was an excellent legitimate trade, embodying natural competition, upon which a gradual substantial hardening of values developed and is still progressive. Present accumulations of stock at this point are slightly in excess of last year; yet this causes no apprehension and is an expected sequence of an early marketing of crop, liberal settlements and prompt shipments, with a balance expected long before the close of the season. Since first advices from the crops early in the year, there has been a constant claim of shortage, all subsequent information appearing to be in support thereof, and it was upon that feature hope was pinned. In comparison with last year, reputable local authority estimates a shrinkage of 10 per cent. in crop of greens and from two to three million pounds deficit in the growths of Japan; and from another reliable source the crop of oolongs for America is placed 13,600,000 lbs. Formosa, 2,400,000 lbs. Amoy

and 2,000,000 lbs. Foochow; making a total of 18,000,000, against 21,500,000 last year. Thus far speculation has been held in check, but indications of something of a move in that line is now said to be under way, directed particularly towards oolongs, and a more active and quicker gaining market is likely to result.

If these authoritative statements as to the existing shrinkage in the tea crop are correct, it will not be long before we have to chronicle an advance in the Canadian market.

### Tea Blending.

Can a grocer blend his own teas? The answer to this is by no means easy, and can only be given in general terms. We would say, from our experience, that a grocer may blend his own teas, just as he may accomplish many other difficult tasks, by painstaking experiments and practice. But in this, as in many other things, one succeeds and a hundred fail. An intelligent man, thoroughly educated in dealing with tea, may, if he is persistent in his experiments, strike the right line and produce blends that will suit his customers; and when he does so there is little doubt that he will find it profitable. On the other hand, there are many who, we fear, never will succeed in making successful blenders, and for such, there is, of course, the assistance of those firms who make this branch of the trade their special duty. So that if we may briefly sum up the foregoing, we should say that the blending of tea is generally wise and profitable; but whether a man should blend his own tea or get

his supplies from wholesale blenders, is a question so largely dependent on the man himself, that each one must be the best judge of his own powers in the matter.—*Chronicle.*

### The Market for Ginseng.

Bradstreet's has the following regarding ginseng, a commodity which is exported from Manitoba to some extent:—The scarcity of supplies of ginseng in the principal markets of the United States induced a material advance in prices, which have reached the highest, when quality is considered. Fears are expressed that the present scarcity foreshadows the ultimate extinction of this drug root as an article of commerce in this country. The principal markets for the product are Louisville, Cincinnati, Chicago and New York. By some the high prices and present scarcity of the root are attributed to a combination or corner by large holders of the article. Quite a change in the methods of marketing the article is reported by the Reporter. The business, it is said, is being gradually absorbed by Chinamen. Interior buyers appear to be common in this as in other lines of trade. Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia and North Carolina are said to be sending less to market than formerly, but this has been partly made up by larger receipts from Wisconsin and Minnesota. Systematic cultivation is practically confined to New York State. The cultivated article does not sell as high as the wild species. Ginseng is bought entirely for export to China.

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