

Canadian Produce in England

Mild Weather—Trade Quiet—South American Cattle—
Canadian Apples

(By Our Own Correspondent.)

London, Feb. 22, 1903.

Spring-like weather of an unusual character has been experienced in this country during the past few weeks. The air is balmy and spring-like, and many trees and shrubs have already shown signs of life. At the present time I am sitting with the window wide open, without any fire; so some idea may be formed as to the weather we are experiencing. Such exceptional conditions it will be readily admitted have had a demoralizing effect upon the provision markets, and on every hand we hear complaints of the dullness of business. Agricultural prospects on this side of the Atlantic are of the best, but there are not a few who anticipate that we shall yet have a sharp touch of winter before long. Anyway there is yet plenty of time for frost and snow to give us a good taste of what they can do. The mild weather has undoubtedly saved a lot of distress among the unemployed, but on the other hand the unseasonable weather is responsible for the quietude in trade. Prospects too, are in no way encouraging. A couple of months ago the optimist said, "After the New Year things will be better," now it is more customary for him to substitute Easter for the New Year. I do not intend to say that trade is altogether unsatisfactory, but rather that there is no development and opening up of fresh channels as might be the case.

THE MEAT TRADE

Interest in the meat business has been centred in the removal of the prohibition which prevented Argentine cattle being imported for slaughtering. Once again our ports are open to live cattle from the South American Republics, provided that they are killed within ten days of landing. This re-admittance of live cattle is not likely to affect the home-reared meat, but the principal sufferers will be Canada and the United States cattle slaughtered at Birkenhead, where prices have been excessively high during the past few months. The supply of home-killed meat will also have considerable effect upon the chilled and frozen trade as public taste runs in favor of home-killed meat as against the frozen article. No cargoes of South American cattle have yet arrived so the markets have not been affected. Canadian cattle at Birkenhead have been of the average quality, and prices do not show any material alteration. Canadian sheep have the market to themselves at Birkenhead, where trade is good and prices are higher all round.

THE BACON TRADE

The bacon trade has been practically dead since my last. Cana-

dian bacon has been in great supply and the pressure to realize has depressed prices. The mild weather has also checked the consumption and leaner meats have been in request, although even these have not been bought with the same readiness as when the article was shillings dearer. Business being so quiet quotations are only nominal. A similar sluggishness is also discernible for hams.

BUTTER AND CHEESE

The butter market has been very quiet and although prices do not show much variation just now they are lower than the quotations in my last dispatch. Supplies from abroad or from cold storage have not been pressed upon unwilling buyers, and so quotations are upheld. Canadian butter is in less request and extreme prices are no longer current. To show the fact of prices I may mention that finest Canadian ranges from \$2.50 to \$3.50 per cwt., while inferior is as low as \$1.70.

The high rates prevailing for Canadian and States cheese make buyers very cautious before concluding purchases and as a matter of fact English cheese is at times sought after to take the place of Canadian, which is by far the dearer of the two and as the amount of the former gets smaller the price hardens. Moderate qualities of Canadian cheese meet a fair trade as lines are scarce.

EGGS AND HONEY

Eggs in common with other provisions are lower in value. The position is very uncertain, as buyers are mostly expecting still lower prices, while there are holders who expect the reverse to happen should the weather become colder on the continent.

As an interesting item I may mention that there is a considerable amount of New Zealand honey on the market just now, which appears to sell readily at 13 cents per glass bottle, containing about 1 lb. gross.

WHEAT AND FLOUR

Traders are suffering from the mild weather and business. Prices rule high for hard, foreign wheat suitable for mixing with the home grown out of condition grain. For instance, new Manitoba is quoted at \$7.92 to \$8.16 per 496 lbs., and red winter at 25 cents lower. Old Duluth again is worth up to \$8.65 per 496 lbs. Canadian oats are in more favor than United States. Canadian flour sells readily at a range of values which compares favorably with other sorts.

The horse trade is very quiet there being no arrivals since my last dispatch and prices remain unchanged as then quoted.

CANADIAN APPLES

Canadian apples have been coming to hand in fairly large quantities. Prices for best samples are rising and are likely to do so before the end of the season. During that part of the season that has already elapsed Canadian fruit growers have notched a success. Not only is the quantity increasing but the quality of the fruit has been more than maintained. There is practically no difference now between the Canadian and the United States apple. Some experts profess to be able to tell one from the other, but where the comparison is made between apples of the same variety, I very much doubt whether the best judge could detect the difference. Where the Canadian fruit scores is in the packing, for the efficient inspection of the government officials render it very rare that a faulty consignment is put upon the market. There ought to be no difficulty about packing apples for shipment. The important thing is to start right with the bottom of the barrel neatly filled, so that there can be no shaking about, because if a few apples get bruised at the top or bottom, they quickly get rotten, and the rest soon follow if they have to go a long journey. There is only one thing that appears to be likely to cause trouble in the future and that is the rapidly growing size of the consignments. As things are going it looks as if there might be a glut of colonial and foreign fruit, including apples, in the course of a few years. The supply seems to be overtaking the demand, and if that goes on, it means that the business will perhaps be hardly worth doing. Sales of Canadian fruit have been heavy, thousands of barrels having been sold during the past fortnight. That excellent cooking apple Fallwater, has been very popular making as much as \$5.52 per barrel, a figure that made it suitable only for the best class trade. Nova Scotian Baldwins make up to \$4.80, Golden Russets to \$6.00, Ben Davis to \$4.56, while Newtown pippins in 40 lb. boxes fetch \$3.36, and Albenarle Newtown \$7.20 to \$7.68 per barrel.

Canadian Horse Show

The ninth annual Horse Show, under the joint auspices of the Canadian Horse Breeders' Association and the Toronto Hunt, will be held at the Armouries, Toronto, on April 29-May 2, 1903. A military tournament will be held in conjunction with it. A liberal prize list has been arranged for, and a most successful show is expected. Entries close on April 18th, and should be made to Mr. Henry Wade, Parliament Buildings, Toronto.

"Where did you Sunday, old man?"
"I didn't Sunday; I Sabbath."
"Eh?"
"Went to church morning and evening."—Detroit Journal.