

prices are somewhat surprising. In the province of Quebec the merchants of Montreal and the Quebec tanners are at war. The Montreal merchants have a buyer in Quebec city, and the Quebec tanners have a representative in the Montreal market. Toronto hide merchants advanced prices one-half cent this week and now pay butchers 7½c. per lb. for No. 1 green cow hides, as compared with 5c. per lb. on April 1st, 1896. Two years ago April 1st brought a surprise for tanners in an unexpected advance from 7 to 8c. per lb. The advance was then made as a result of an unparalleled rise in prices in the United States. American markets have shown wonderful strength during the winter months; but no recent change in values has been made in the Western States, upon which to base the local advance. The advices received from the Western market this week reported a demand for hides, but offerings by packers were small and only a limited volume of business was transacted. No changes were reported in prices, with native steers, all weights, at 9½c.; butt brands, at 8½c.; Texas, all weights, at 8½c.; Colorados, at 7½c.; light native cows, at 9½c.; heavy do., at 8½c., and branded cows, at 8½ to 8¾c. The recent talk of probable larger shipments of hides from Europe to America, has drawn increased attention to the statistical position there, and latest figures received from Havre and Antwerp show the stock on hand to be only one-third of the amount held at this time last year. At Havre there were 92,637 hides, against 220,906 hides a year ago, and at Antwerp 53,884 hides as compared with 204,434 last year. The only feature in the entire market favorable to the buyer is the slaughter in the River Plate, which shows the kill thus far this year to be 831,000; same time in 1896, 629,000; 1895, 744,000; 1894, 733,000; 1893, 696,000, and in 1892, 886,000. The average for the six years is 753,000.

LONDON FUR SALES.

The following account of prices realized at the recent London fur sales has come to hand. It is incomplete, as the sales had not been completed at the time of cabling.

At Hudson Bay Company's sale—Bear, black, 25 per cent. lower than last March; bear, brown, 25 per cent. lower than last March; bear, grizzly, 50 per cent. lower than last March; musk ox, 5 per cent. higher than last March. Salted fur seal, northwest coast, were mostly bid in. Marten, 12½ per cent. lower than last March; red fox, 5 per cent. lower than last March; white fox, 15 per cent. higher than last March; beaver, 10 per cent. lower than in January; muskrat, 10 per cent. lower than in January.

At C. M. Lampson & Co.'s sale—Blue fox, 25 per cent. lower than last March; fisher, 15 per cent. higher than last March; musk ox, 30 per cent. lower than last March. Dry fur seal, 20 per cent. lower than last March; wolverine, 12½ per cent. lower than last March; lynx, 27½ per cent. lower than last March; salted fur seal, northwest coast, same as last December. These prices are very unsatisfactory and have discouraged those engaged in the industry.

CANADIAN RANCHES.

The cattlemen of the North-West Territories are expecting a prosperous year in 1897. The activity in the mining regions will open up, it is thought, a profitable market near at hand. The *Alberta Tribune*, March 27th, says: "Notwithstanding the unusual severe winter the cattle on the ranges are, we understand, looking remarkably well. In consequence of the deep snow many ranchers have been obliged to feed more than usual, but they will be amply repaid by the condition of the cattle. As far as we can learn the new quarantine regulations will not affect the cattle industry, and the markets in the mining regions will not only absorb all the spare cattle of Alberta, but a large supply from Washington and Montana. Prices of steers are looking upwards, and with the competition that exists amongst the buyers for British and Kootenay markets, apart from buyers for home consumption, the Alberta ranchers could find a ready sale for double the present supply—a state of affairs which should encourage more capitalists to go into the cattle industry."

THE LATE M. VICTOR HUDON.

In the death of M. Victor Hudon, Montreal loses one of her conspicuous captains of industry. Engaged at different times in different lines of business, he will chiefly be remembered as one of the pioneers of the cotton manufacture, in which he continued to the last. A quarter of a century ago he became interested in the V. Hudon Cotton Mills, which were erected at Hochelaga, the name of which indicates the leading part which he had in the enterprise. Born on the 31st August, 1812, his infant ears might have heard something of the discord of the war which was that year declared by the United States against Great Britain. He first saw the light at Riviere Ouelle, Quebec. At the age of eighteen, his entry to business life began by his becoming clerk to

M. Chouinard. Two years later he went to Montreal, where he transferred services, in the same capacity, to M. J. B. Casarant, for whom he afterwards acted, for five years, at St. Cesaire. In 1842, he became the partner of his cousin, M. Ephrem Hudon, in the dry goods and grocery business at Montreal, a partnership which lasted till 1857. When it ended the business was continued by M. Victor Hudon, on a scale of greatly increased imports. For several years his business with Havana was extensive. The next step, as already noted, was the erection of the V. Hudon cotton mills, a new line of energy for him, but one in which he had the qualities which brought success. M. Hudon was one of those men who possess in an eminent degree the means of commanding success. Among the incidents of his business career are noticeable that he was a member of the Montreal Harbor Board and a director of the Jacques Cartier Bank.

FOR GROCERS AND PROVISION DEALERS.

The people of Chatham refused recently to vote \$10,000 with which to erect a new market building.

Mail advices from British Columbia indicate great uncertainty on the part of the cannerymen as to the new fishery regulations.

The merchants and others interested in the dairy and provision trade of Prince Edward Island are considering the erection of a cold storage warehouse at Charlottetown.

The cigar makers of London, Ont., complain of several abuses which they claim exist in the London factories. It is claimed that the employers carry to excess a system of fines for various breaches of discipline in the factory.

The contracts for the future shipment of grain from Montreal this coming season are being steadily made. It is said that already space has been engaged for between five and six million bushels. This, of course, includes continental ports. A number of the lines have already let their space for the months of May and June, and a portion of July.

The members of the Montreal Wholesale Grocery Travellers' Association held their annual dinner last week at Peloquin's Hotel, Back River. President Massicotte occupied the chair, and there was a large attendance of members and guests, among the latter being Alderman Laporte, Messrs. E. W. Villeneuve, A. D. Fraser, J. A. McLean, and J. Lamoreux.

Mail advices from California are to the effect that the fruit season is some three or four weeks late owing to cold rains. The pleasant weather is forcing the fruit buds quite rapidly, and the orchards are one mass of bloom. Frosts have slightly damaged peaches, apricots, and almonds in few sections, but the outlook is for a very heavy crop of all kinds of fruit and nuts.

The *Minneapolis Market Record* says: "Farmers, March 1st, have 24,000,000 bushels less than last year, and 40,000,000 bushels less than March 1st, 1895. In India there must be 56,000,000 bushels less and 80,000,000 less than March 1st, 1895; in Argentina, 12,000,000 bushels less and 28,000,000 less than March 1st, 1896; in United Kingdom, 8,000,000 bushels more; France and Russia, about same; making a total shortage of 128,000,000 bushels as compared with a year ago."

A special meeting of the Hamilton Retail Grocers' Association was held this week. Mr. J. O. Carpenter, president, was in the chair and the members were out in goodly numbers. A report was presented by the Pure Food Exhibition Committee, showing that all arrangements are about completed, and that prospects are that it will be a most successful show. All the grocers of the city have been drafted on various committees, to be present every day to look after the interests of patrons and exhibitors. The arrangements were generally discussed and found satisfactory.

The shipments of salt from the Mersey during the month of February show a considerable falling off as compared with February of last year, the large increase to the United States, British North America, Africa and Australasia being more than neutralized by the very heavy decline in the shipments to Calcutta. The February shipments to the United States amounted to 11,248 tons, against 8,156 tons in February, 1896; those to British North America being 1,610 tons, compared with 620 tons. The total shipments for the month amounted to 30,137 tons, against 35,956 tons in February, 1896.

The *Trade Review*, of St. John's, Nfld., says in its last issue: "Lobster packers, from all one can learn, are going more largely than ever into the trade next season, and many new men will try their hand at the business. No one doubts now that the ground all round the island is being over-fished, and if some restrictions are not put upon the catchers, the lobster in Newfoundland will soon be as extinct as the auk. The uniform close time system does not apply to the varying coastal conditions of this country, and the sooner it is substituted for a uniform length of time (the starting point to be decided by the packers within their own districts) the better."