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THE VICTORIA JEWELLERS,

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Ever seen in the City of Victoria. These Goods were purchased in the east especially for our Christmas trade. The quality of this Silverware is the very best and of the latest design.

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76 GOVERNMENT ST., COLONIST BLOCK

THE CATTLE QUESTION.

Dear beef has been the subject that has for some days past been vexing and annoying the thrifty housekeeper, who seeing from the daily papers that it was proposed to carry out the quarantine law with respect to live cattle brought in from the United States for purposes of slaughter, began to imagine all kinds of contingencies. A scarcity of beef, and therefore higher prices was the not most unnatural order of argument, and then came the inquiry of how was this going to be provided against? The facts, as we understand them, are that on November 13th, 1890, an order in Council was passed at Ottawa, ordering that the provisions in force regarding the importation of cattle into the province of Manitoba should be applied to the province of British Columbia. This law, which provides for a quarantine of ninety days for cattle coming in from the United States, never having been enforced here, recently, some Calgary stock breeders visited the city, and brought the matter before the notice of the Collector of Customs, urging him, it is said, to carry out the law. The Collector at once wrote to Ottawa for instructions.

According to the local butchers, glad as they are to utilize province-fed stock during some months of the year, it is impossible for them to do so all the time, as no fat cattle are available. Then they are compelled to look to Washington, Oregon and California, the freight and charges from the Canadian Northwest Territories being a serious obstacle in the way of making use of beeves from that section of country even should they happen to be in condition, which is not the case. How-

ever, the Calgary cattle men, understanding that the tariff of Canada is a protective one, have made up their minds that if there can, by any possibility, be any advantage to them from it, they are bound to have it. In a word, they propose to work off their thin beef, which they cannot sell in the east, on the British Columbia market, and that at exorbitant prices, since, by the assistance of the customs duty, they hope to control this market which cannot, like Ontario and Quebec, make any use of frozen meat.

The other day, utterly ignoring questions of policies or sentiment, Mr. L. Goodacre, the well known Victoria butcher, thus presented the case: "At present, the local butchers import 600 head of cattle per month into the Island, averaging 420,000 lbs. in weight. Now the price of prime beef to our customers is 15c. per lb., but, should the law you speak of be enforced among us, the price, at the very lowest computation, will be raised to 20c., counting freight, wharfage and duty. So that the people of this island will have to pay per month \$21,000 more for their beef than they are doing to-day." This statement is one that is well calculated to alarm the consumer.

But, on the other hand, Mr. Van Volkenburg, himself a well-informed stock-raiser and butcher, has given an opinion that is entitled to considerable weight. He says:

"The Government at Ottawa know what they are doing when they make a law like the one under discussion. It will be the finest thing that could happen to the Province if it is carried out in its entirety. It is foolish to talk about a 'beef famine.' There could not possibly be anything of the sort, as beef, and good beef, is always available from the other side,

and would cost no more than it does now. The wholesale price now, in all the Sound cities, is from 6c to 8c per lb., and, adding the freight and duty to this, the butchers in Victoria would not dare to offer it for sale for more than 11c wholesale, or 15c retail. If they did, they would have the Sound butchers over here competing with them, and running them out. Let us put every cent of duty we can on live stock, except for stock purposes, from the United States, and soon you will see hundreds of small farmers starting to breed cattle in this Province."

If it should happen that the present regulation be carried out to the letter, even though it be in the end a blessing in disguise the vast body of consumers must suffer materially unless, as has been represented, dressed meat from the Sound cities comes in at prices sufficiently low to prevent the retailers from selling the article at exorbitant rates. We fully agree with the idea of encouraging local industry to the utmost extent possible, but at the same time recognize the fact that there are consumers as well as producers who are entitled to consideration. By all means let every possible opportunity be given to the British Columbia farmer and stock raiser, who if they will only be content with a moderate amount of assistance will obtain all that is really necessary to enable them to make their industry in every way prosperous and thoroughly successful, as they have all the natural conditions necessary to that end. —*British Columbia Commercial Journal.*

ALTHOUGH it has been known by the public for some time, it is only now it is officially announced that the letter rate to Australia has been reduced to 5 cents per half-ounce, with newspaper postage correspondingly lowered.

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