

COMMERCIAL.

Wintry weather has set in and general trade has been more lively in most of the leading lines. Farmers have generally disposed of the bulk of their produce, and are now investing the proceeds in the purchase of goods that they require for the winter and spring. This, of course, makes trade livelier, and a good many country merchants have been in town during the week replenishing their stocks, especially in groceries and dry goods. Certainly, iron, fruit, etc., feel the impetus thus given. For some years the government of "this Dominion of ours" has imposed a very heavy tax, amounting to more than 100 per cent, on petroleum that is imported into Canada. As a protective measure this tax appears to have been a failure, for Canada uses over 5,000,000 of gallons of United States oil per year and only about half-a-million of gallons of the native product. The U. S. oil is pronounced to be far superior for practical purposes to any that Canada produces. Again, the use of tank cars for the carriage of crude petroleum is prohibited, and oil has to be imported in barrels. This prevents the refining of imported crude oil into Canada, and makes an extra and unnecessary cost of 10 cents per gallon to the consumer. The duty seems to be imposed only in the interests of a few pump men in Lambton County, Ont. Is this duty and are these restrictions intended to protect only those who pump the crude petroleum from the earth? or are they meant to protect the refining industry? or both? If the latter, it might be well for the government to pay a bounty on the production and admit American crude oil free and maintain the duty on the refined article. If this were done American oil refined in Canada would meet the domestic demand for that quality, and Canadian labor would find occupation in refineries that do not now exist. It has been stated that Canadian oil is superior to American for lubricating purposes. But if that is a fact it would maintain its supremacy despite the competition of lubricants made of American oil. If American petroleum was admitted free the consumption of Canadian oil might cease, but the consumer would obtain what is proved to be a better article for at least ten cents per gallon less than he now pays. The *Canadian Manufacturer* remarks:—"It does not seem to be any lack of enterprise on the part of Canadian refiners that their coal oil is not as highly prized for domestic consumption as that made in the United States. According to the *Petroleum Advertiser* one refining concern there owns one of the most complete oil manufacturing in the world. What with the lubricating oil, paraffine wax and gas oil that they turn out, nothing is wasted, everything is used up, and their plant is in continual use from one year's end to the other. This shows the enterprise and energy calculated to ensure unbounded success; but as good oil as this concern can produce, and as cheaply as they can make it, it does not fill the bill, for consumers will have American oil, paying over a hundred per cent duty on it, giving it the preference over any oil which has ever yet been manufactured in Canada."

Among the many city by-laws which, being unenforced, are unknown, is one which prohibits a person under the age of sixteen driving a vehicle. It is surely time that this wise law was rescued from the obscurity into which it has lapsed. Its enforcement will be a public boon. The way in which boys recklessly and wildly drive along our streets, in apparent emulation of more mature men who are allowed to run over people with impunity, is scandalous. The grossly cruel way in which these boy-drivers often abuse the unfortunate horses which short-sighted owners leave to their tender mercies is very reprehensible. This resurrection of a forgotten by-law should bring up the whole matter of the control of traffic on the public streets. The police should be instructed as to what by-laws are really in existence and be ordered to enforce them against every offender.

Bradstreet's report of the week's failures:—

	Week Previous Weeks		Corresponding to	
	Nov. 25, week.	1892	Nov. 25, 1891	1890
United States	135	205	242	233
Canada	27	41	37	36

DRY GOODS.—The advent of more wintry weather has livened up the dry goods business, and trade in all classes of staples, especially of winter goods, has been as large as is expected at this season. Most buyers who come from the outside appear to be interested in holiday goods, which class of material is selling very fast. Almost anything in this line seems to sell, but the choicest goods are offered. New designs, striking patterns and delicate colorings mark the lines of fancy goods. While cheapness is the soul of selling in some of these lines, nevertheless quite large orders are being executed for this class of goods. Stock-taking is the watchword of the hour, and all are interested in the result of the season's traffic. As a result of this stock-taking nearly every house is pushing broken lots and remnants. Special "drives" are shown in every department—some worthy, some not so, and many very properly designated as "snaps." Letter orders continue to be very numerous, and in some cases clerks have to work in the evenings to keep up with the letters received. Orders run chiefly for men's heavy underwear, ladies' underwear, hosiery and gloves. A large percentage of these orders are repeats. The sharp advance in raw cotton has led to a further advance in cotton goods of all kinds, the combine, of course, taking full advantage of the rise in the raw material. Orders of several lines given in September and October for spring delivery cannot be repeated except at a very considerable advance. It is impossible to state what the actual advance is, as it varies considerably, the lines that are selling most freely being more greatly advanced than those that are dragging in the market.

BREADSTUFFS.—The local demand for flour continues to be quite fair, but buying is of a hand-to-mouth character at steady prices. Still, both bakers and dealers seem disposed to anticipate their wants further ahead, as they feel assured that prices cannot recede further to any material extent. Wheat is very low in Ontario, and Millers there, even at the present cheap rates for flour, are making money. The *Montreal Trade Bulletin* says:—"Consider-

able quantities are going forward direct from Ontario mills to the Maritime Provinces and Newfoundland, sales having been made of straight rollers at \$3.60 to \$3.65 c.i.f. St. John's, Nfld. In this market sales of car lots of straight rollers have taken place on track at \$3.45 to \$3.60, and 90 per cents at \$3.55 to \$3.65. It is stated that several round lots of winter patents have been made by millers west of Toronto for English account, to be shipped via Boston and New York. In spring wheat flour, sales of city strong bakers have transpired at \$4 for round lots, which is 10c. higher than it could be bought for about 10 days ago. The market is in good shape for spring wheat flour, and any change will, it is thought, be in an upward direction."

PROVISIONS.—The local provision market does not show any change. The demand is fairly good, and prices remain as they were at our last report. A report from Montreal reads as follows:—"In Canada short cut moss pork there have been sales at \$17.50 to \$18, and the market is firm at those figures, which might probably be shaded for round quantities. A good business has been done in lard, sales of round lots of compound having taken place at \$1.45 per pail of 20 lbs., and we quote \$1.45 to \$1.50 with a firm market and higher prices looked for. Smoked meats are in good demand, hams selling all the way from 11c. to 12½c. as to quality and quantity. Bacon sells at 11c. to 12c. under a fair enquiry. It is not as scarce as it was."

BUTTER.—There is no change in the butter market here. Holders of creamery are, of course, ready to entertain offers, but the want of encouragement over the cable deters shippers from becoming buyers at present prices for finest, so that the actual movement is restricted to the moderate demand on local consumptive account. In Montreal "there appears to be plenty of creamery butter offering. Two factorymen were in the city yesterday claiming that their goods which they sold at 23 c. had been thrown up, owing to some defect or other which is usually discovered in a weak market. Other creameries are also offered. The November make of creamery is said to be very fine, but present prices are looked upon as too high." A London, G. B., letter says:—"Market quotations for butter are no guide as to the course of sales, for although no change is recorded owing to diminished supply, concessions are known to have been made to waiting buyers who would not come in at the ruling rate, and to a large extent, therefore, the prices current are incorrect. Buyers will, however, probably get nipped, as to the Antipodean arrivals, on which they have been counting and for which they are lying in ambush, are now cabled as coming in only half the previously advertised quantity, owing to bad producing conditions in Victoria, and prices may likely take another upward turn in consequence. Danish still sells up to 140s., a ridiculous figure for the average buyer. American and Canadian are much in request, and considerably firmer in value, while margarine has gone up a bit further, as purchasers who hold off the genuine must fill with something. The adulteration acts are a great power here, but retailers risk the pillory when rates are so dead against them as now, and their customers will have a shilling cut."

CHEESE.—The cheese market here rules quiet but steady. Stocks are light for the season, and what finest stock there is is very firmly held, so that it is difficult to give a reliable price on it. A Montreal report says:—"The market is decidedly firm, finest Septembers and Octobers being unobtainable at under 10½c., a bid of 10½c. being made for 500 boxes of finest Octobers without fetching them. Plenty of English orders are on the market for finest at 10½c., but limits will have to be advanced before they get the stuff. We quote prices firm at 10½c. to 10¾c. for finest, some holders asking 11c. for white, there being fully ¾c. premium on white. Underpriced goods are quoted at 9½c. to 10½c." A London correspondent writes:—"Cheese has veered round to pretty much the condition of butter, only that buyers have less chance in this department of getting any hold for their ideas. They expect rates to go down, and talk of the big stocks said to be held here when seeking concessions. But we have seen the last of heavy unloadings now, and if stocks are large so is consumption, so that while trade hangs fire this week, and may do so even for another and yet another week, the upward march can hardly be stayed, and patient holders will be rewarded. In London prices remain about the same, and Liverpool and Glasgow rates have levelled down to —, so that from 50s. right up to 56s. for finest Septembers may now be generally quoted. It will be easier to run up the better parcels of late make when the mass of inferior undoubtedly in the country has been disposed of at the dreadfully low currencies it is being disposed of."

EGGS.—There is nothing new to say about the local egg market except that it appears to be somewhat steadier in tone, though prices have not notably altered. It is reported from England as follows:—"With Italy, Austria, Hungary and Russia sending largely increased supplies, the paucity from France is not felt, and prices have tumbled for most selections of eggs in London, Liverpool, and the North, while some markets are simply demoralized by heavy plungings. About 3d. to 1s. per 120 may be recorded as the drop, and agents fear another fall next week. Canadians still at about 8s. to 9s. per long hundred."

APPLES.—This fruit continues to be in over-abundant supply, and prices here rule lower than usual. The fact is that outside markets are so depressed as to offer no outlet for our surplus product this year. Many of our farmers are turning their best apples into cider, and the product thus made is of better quality than customary, while the price is so low as to place it within the reach of all. A London letter says of the English market:—"Apples are a slow and gorged market still. Some 300 bbls. American Baldwins sold on Thursday in London at 7s. 9d. per bbl., while Canadian Greenings and Calverts were thrown away at as low as 2s. 9d. per bbl., 8s. being an exceptional top price. The trade is simply demoralized by forced sales of heavy consignments of fruit, much of which is poor, and too much, unfortunately, in such a condition as to necessitate cataloguing as valueless."