THE COMMERCIAL MARKETS.

Giving Ranges of Prices in some of the More Important Branches of Trade; their Situation and Tendencies.

TORONTO.

Toronto, April 11th.

Fish.—Shipments from the western lakes are expected in two weeks. The season is backward for fresh codfish. We quote:—Whitefish, round, 7½c. per lb.; whitefish, dressed, 10c. per lb.; trout, 10c. per lb.; tulibees, 6c. per lb.; fresh haddock, 7c. per lb.; fresh cod, 8c. per lb.; salmon, 12c. per lb.; halibut, 12c. per lb.; bloaters, 75c. per lb.; flounders, 5c. per lb.; pickerel, 8c. per lb.; finnan haddie, 10c. per lb.; smelts, 8 and 12½c. per lb.; shredded cod, 90c. per dozen; bluenose cod, 6c. per lb.; Labrador herrings, $4.75 per barrel; Digby herrings, 60c. per bundle; Halifax fish cakes, $2.40 per case.

Fruit.—The cold weather has lessened the demand in this market. Pineapples are high in price owing to the excessive rains in Cuba, which have delayed shipment. Tomatoes are firm in price. The drought in Florida has curtailed the crop by about 50 per cent. The lemon market is very strong with prospects for future business with high prices. The Verdilla crop of lemons is reported to be 50 per cent. short, owing to the frosts earlier in the season. There are two steamers of fruit on their way to the Montreal spring sales. The first one brings 50,000 boxes of oranges, and lemons, and is due on May 1st. The second vessel will have a cargo of practically all oranges. In view of the light offerings at Montreal, and the condition of the market in Canada, prices are expected to be high. The orange market continues very firm, and the demand equals the supply, preventing quotations.

Groceries.—A wholesale firm told the Monetary Times that there were no low-priced teas on the market at present fit to drink. Sugar has advanced 10c a cwt. The market is firm. When navigation opens, and the roads become passable, business generally will become better. Dried fruits are very firm, although the demand is light.

Hides and Skins.—The effect of the improved conditions in the money situation has been felt in this market. In the States it is thought that bottom prices have been touched. Country hides are being bought cheaply or not at all. This is not only on account of the condition of the market, but because the grubs are appearing now. The calf skin season has commenced, and large quantities are arriving. There has been practically no change for over a year in prices, although there is half a cent reduction in Chicago. The market is down, caused by the big influx at first, of stock. Against this, the tanners have waited to lay in their stocks. Dealers paid some foolish prices last year, and probably they will be careful in handling this market now. They must bear in mind that the market is weak. We quote:—Country hides, 7½ to 8½c.; sheepskins, $1.65 to $1.80.

Maple Products.—Syrup is selling here at 6½ to 7c. per lb. in wood, and 70 to 75 for ten-pound tins. Sugar is quoted at 10 to 11c.

MONTREAL.

Montreal, April 10th.

Montreal wonders whether spring will ever really begin. Each successive cold spell has been met cheerfully with the assurance that it is the last—but still they come. On Monday morning snow commenced falling at daylight. When it ceased at noon a fall of ten inches, a record for the winter was recorded. With such interruptions, it is not easy for trade to continue unaffected. Retail merchants are feeling the effect of the uncertainty considerably. Meantime, the wholesale trade goes on more active than ever. The season of low freights has arrived again, and shipping is going on vigorously. This will be stimulated still further, when navigation opens, which should be at the end of this month, at the latest. Drygoods merchants report firmness in all lines. Stocks of ribbons and trimmings of all kinds as of well as of millinery are reported to be light, and silks are showing a tendency to advance. Some of the cotton companies are issuing new lists at higher figures one being 7½ per cent. up. The mills are a way behind with deliveries, and knitting mills are refusing repeat orders for fall underwear, save for October delivery. Groceries are moving fairly well, and boot and shoe houses are said to be active, though, as reported more extensively below, hide merchants are experiencing exceptional dullness in demand. Hardware merchants are busy, and some are working late in order to get their shipments ready. Iron and steel manufacturers are filled right up with orders. A most satisfactory trade is expected during the coming season.

Butter.—The market shows considerable strength, and prices have advanced a cent or so since a week ago. The cause of this is the exceptional scarcity of stock in the market. There is very little choice fall grades left. Sales of held creamery are made at 28 to 29c., these being largely of stock returned from England. New milk creamery is quoted at 30c. to 31c. per lb. Dealers expect that receipts will be fairly large towards the end of next week.

Cheese.—Old stock is quoted at 13½c., and fodders at 13c. The April make of the latter is being contracted for, in the country, at 12½ to 12¾c.

Eggs.—The market for eggs shows a slight advance, as compared with last week, owing to scarcity of stock. Dealers think production is on the light side for this time of year, and as the demand is quite large, prices are a shade higher, at 17½ to 18c. per dozen, according to quantity.

Grain.—Oats are reported easy. Prices are lower at 43c. per bushel for No. 2 oats; store, 42c. for No. 3, and 41c. for No. 4. This is about the only grain in the market.

Hides.—The market is exceedingly dull, even for this time of year. This is largely in sympathy with conditions in the United States. The quality of beef hides is very poor and prices show a decline of ½c., at 9½, 10½, and 11½c. per lb., for Nos. 3, 2 and 1, respectively. Calfskins are steady but dull, at 13c. per lb. for No. 2, and 15c. for No. 1.