

DAIRY PRODUCE.

The demand for butter for the holiday season was rather particularly brisk, and stocks were cleared out very considerably. Since the turn of the year, too, receipts have been on the light side. The result has been some fractional advances in prices, especially in the better grades. Quotations range about as follows: Creamery butter, prints, 22 to 23½c.; tubs, 19 to 20c.; dairy rolls, 1 lb., choice, 17 to 18c., large rolls, 16 to 17c., medium qualities, about 15c.; dairy tubs, good to extra, 16 to 17½c.; other grades, 12 to 15c.

The market for cheese continues quite firm, owing to the lasting good enquiry from Great Britain, where dealers have evidently gone a little astray of their aim, which was to keep prices depressed and prevent the losses which accrued from an opposite policy a year ago. Then again the decrease in the Canadian production of cheese this year, must have had some effect. In the local Canadian markets a very fair business is being done. The price for large cheese remains at about 11c., with 11¼ and 11½c. for twins.

Eggs are very firm, in keeping with the scarcity of new-laid. In fact, practically none have come into the cities during the last few weeks.

The importance to the nation of Canada's dairy products cannot be overrated, and that is why such a convention as that of the Eastern Ontario Dairymen's Association, which met in Brockville on Wednesday and Thursday last, is of so much interest.

In his annual address, the president, Mr. D. Derbyshire called attention to the necessity which existed of improving not only the quantity, but the quality of the butter and cheese made in Canada. For this there is required united effort. Besides this, each individual dairyman should produce only the cleanest and most wholesome milk; the factories must be kept up-to-date, have the latest improved curing rooms, and be under the direction of properly qualified graduates of dairying. There must also be clean wagons with proper covers for delivering the goods to the railway, clean refrigerator or ventilated cars to convey the product to the shipping port, and steamships properly fitted with cold air channels, to convey the product to the ultimate market.

Other papers read were by Messrs. C. F. Whitney, of Ottawa, who showed what a wide difference existed in net profits between individual cows and herds; Prof. G. H. Grisdale, of Ottawa, on "Building up a dairy herd." This speaker gave an instance of how one man had in four years run up the average annual value of his herd from \$35 to \$70. Prof. J. W. Robertson showed the probable drift of his remarks when he stated the fact that the farmers of Denmark received \$8,500,000 more in the British market for their bacon, butter and eggs than any other people received for the same quantity.

THE FIRE WASTE.

Property to the value of two hundred and forty-seven millions of dollars, \$247,641,000, was destroyed by fire in the United States and Canada during 1904. The figure is a hard one to grasp. Will it be made any more intelligible if we divide it by twelve, and show that this waste means twenty millions per month; or by fifty-two, showing that it means \$4,750,000 loss per week; or by 365, which will demonstrate that \$676,700 worth of property was destroyed every twenty-four hours—equal to \$28,106 gone up in smoke every hour of 1904. And yet we do not seem to care.

Ignorant people will say, with a grin, "Oh, the insurance companies bear most of the loss." This is where they are mistaken. It is not insurance capital that bears the loss, but the accumulated premiums of years, contributed by the property-owners of America themselves. We present below a compilation of fire waste figures for last year by months, compared with 1903 and 1902. This table, which includes a partial estimate for the month of December, is taken from the Journal of Commerce and Commercial Bulletin, of New York.

	1902.	1903.	1904.
January	\$15,032,800	\$13,106,350	\$21,790,200
February	21,010,500	16,090,800	90,051,000
March	12,056,600	9,907,650	11,212,150
April	13,984,600	13,549,000	23,623,000
May	14,866,000	16,366,800	15,221,400
June	10,245,350	14,684,350	10,646,700
July	10,028,000	12,838,600	11,923,200
August	7,425,550	8,428,350	9,715,200
September	9,945,000	9,939,450	14,387,650
October	9,593,300	10,409,800	12,866,200
November	10,546,650	13,589,550	11,515,000
December	14,616,500	17,224,700	14,700,000
Total	\$149,260,850	\$156,195,600	\$247,641,700

These figures, even with the three great conflagrations—Baltimore, Rochester, and Toronto—deducted, show that last year's was a heavier loss than in 1903, which was a bad year from a fire underwriting standpoint. The moral must be re-affirmed: We are far too careless about fire.

FIRE PROTECTION AND RATES.

It is natural for a community to be restive under a burden to which it is not accustomed, or which it deems unjust. The average man does not take kindly to a novel impost, whether its author is the State or a municipality or an individual landlord. And so we can quite well understand that if a fire underwriting company or an association of such companies makes a demand upon a householder or a merchant of increased rates of fire insurance, the first attitude of that man is one of amazed or even angry resistance. "Why do you want to tax me this year at a higher rate?" he asks, "when my father never paid more than your last year's figures. I take just as good care of my premises as he did. You never discovered defects in my property before, and the town is quite as well protected against fire as it used to be. I think you are 'holding me up' unnecessarily, and I will fight before I pay this exaction."

This is not an over-statement of what has been going on in the minds, and has been expressed by the tongues or pens, of thousands of persons in North America during the past year. And the prejudice which exists against companies, whether loan companies, heat and light companies, or insurance companies, which are suspected of monopoly has found scope and expression in some such terms. Patience, conciliation, and a calm explaining of altered conditions and needs are required on the part of insurance men to quiet suspicion and to allay resentment when increased rates are charged by underwriters for indemnity. Anything like peremptoriness or what the unthinking term "bulldozing" is sure to be resented in such case by the unintelligent. Often, too, the capitalist or the manufacturer will hastily resent measures taken by the fire underwriters which experience teaches to be necessary when a little thought,