

Business Side of Farming.

MIDWINTER LIVE STOCK TRADE

Relatively more strength has been shown in the hog market than any other branch of the live stock trade. Receipts at such distributing and packing points as Chicago, Missouri river centers, Buffalo, Pittsburg and Cincinnati are about as usual for mid-winter, but the demand is excellent. We are enjoying a splendid home market for all classes of hog product and our exports continue at a rapid pace. Recent prices have averaged 75c@81c higher than a year ago and the undertone is one of continued confidence.

A good many farmers are marketing beef cattle which they presume are first-class in every particular. So they are from the standpoint of the neighborhood feed lots. But when placed beside the best offerings at the various stockyards they often fall below the standard and sale returns are disappointing. Don't practice unwise economy and endeavor to save feed, but make your cattle strictly first-class if you expect top quotations. The sheep trade is without important feature, active and generally steady. A good many lambs and yearlings are offered. Large numbers of sheep are on feed in the west and these will come on the markets before long.

INERTIA IN WHEAT MARKET.

To every wheat grower in the country, whether in Pa, Okla or N D, the recent extreme weakness has brought great disappointment. The last half of Jan saw prices carried down several cents to the lowest level on the crop, with the contract grade at Chicago quoted around 61c p bu and May delivery a shade under 65c. From these low prices a small though gratifying recovery took place. No particularly new elements have been developed in the situation. It is the old question of inertia, lack of support, and general apathy on both sides the ocean. Considering the character of the demand it was a case of "too much wheat in sight." Public stocks in this country are large, but that is to be expected at this time of year. Europe has fair reserves and the buying countries are momentarily somewhat indifferent to offerings of wheat and flour from the U S. The excellent crop of Argentina, recently harvested, is now available for market and there was some pressure of this wheat in western European trade centers.

So far as crop conditions are concerned there is little to be said. It is the rest period in winter wheat throughout all the northern hemisphere, and conditions in Europe are devoid of significant feature. Here and there a tinge of anxiety over fear of frost damage. In our own winter wheat belt snow protection has been quite inadequate up to a recent date, and this leaves the fields sensitive to sharp frosts throughout all of the Ohio valley and all the way to Mo and Kan. Wheat prices have settled to so low a point that the markets should respond promptly to the development of any bullish influences.

Bureau of Animal Industry—The magnitude of the work of inspecting live animals and dressed meats for interstate and foreign trade is little appreciated. The past year this bureau made ante-mortem inspections of animals to the number of 53,223,000; the rejections were 156,539. The total number of post-mortem inspections was 43,163,000. In '92 when the work was begun it cost 43c per head to make the ante-mortem inspection, and this is now reduced to about 7c. The government inspection and the certificate of freedom from disease form a great aid in maintaining our export trade in foreign countries.

Paper from Peat—Several factories for making paper and cardboard from peat have been established and capitalists are exploiting the proposition in this country. The peat used is that filled with fibrous roots, and the most valuable peat beds are the raised bogs that have become piled up in mound form, also certain kinds of vegetation, such as reeds, moss, grass, etc. Large tracts of this peat bog are said to be

THE AMERICAN AND FOREIGN PRODUCE MARKETS AT A GLANCE

The highest quotations of wholesale prices for standard grades of farm produce in the leading markets of the world on the dates named; poorer stuff lower.

Table with columns for various produce items (Wheat, Corn, Oats, etc.) and prices in different markets (Boston, New York, Chicago, etc.) for January 1900.

available in the northern and eastern states and it is possible a new industry of considerable magnitude may be formed. This is somewhat in line with the increasing use of slough grass in the northwest in the manufacture of binding twine, rugs, etc.

The Corn Pack of 1899, according to the American Grocer, was 5,402,000 cases against 4,448,500 cases in '98. Leading states in the production were N Y, Ill, Mo, Ia, the Del peninsula, O, in about the order named. The average annual corn pack, covering a period of 10 years, was 3,320,000 cases. It will thus be seen that an enormous quantity was put up last season, but fortunately it has been well distributed and the outlook is promising for the 1900 campaign. Farmers should be able to make reasonably profitable contracts with canners.

Fireworks in Butter—Following the long period of steady advance which carried the market to a 30c level, butter prices broke sharply the middle of Jan. The decline in the space of a week amounted to 465c p lb in N Y and Chicago, and half that much in Boston. Top figures seriously checked the consumption, and at the same time stimulated activity at the creameries; the resultant break was inevitable. At the decline more support was accorded the market, which is now in a fairly healthy position.

A Good Many Onions are still on hand in the truck sections of O, N Y, Ind, Wis and western N E. Prices continue rather low and much uncertainty prevails as to the future. If southern vegetables should be severely injured by cold weather, as was the case a year ago, the onion market may do very well during Feb and March. But if the season is favorable to southern truck, the opinion prevails that onions will be forced on the market in large quantities.

Corn at the Paris Exposition—The government is arranging as a special feature of the U S exhibit a practical demonstration of the food value of corn by means of cooking exhibits. This will be under the care of the U S dept of agri, and should prove of great educational value to the millions in

attendance at the big show. Our exports of corn to Europe are splendid but capable of further great expansion.

Fancy Prices for Flaxseed—Within the last few days considerable quantities of flaxseed have been sold at Chicago at \$1 50 p bu, the highest figure in many years. No doubt the acreage in the northwest for the crop of 1900 will be a large one, and farmers are liable to overdo the matter. It should not be forgotten that as recently as '96 flaxseed has sold as low as 65c per bu.

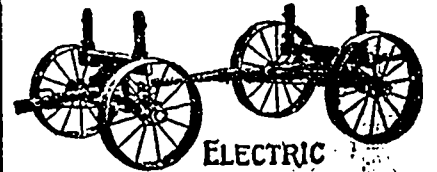
Wool Advance Checked—Following the sharp upturn of the past few months the market is more quiet, buyers conservative and paying top prices under protest. Yet the trade as a whole continues healthy, mills are well employed, the demand for finished fabrics is good and the situation as a whole is one of continued hopefulness.

The Earliest Peach, other things being equal, is the variety that will make the grower the most money. What is said to be one of the earliest sorts is the Victor. The tree is said, by the Harrison nurseries of Berlin, Md, to be a strong, hardy grower, resisting cold and drouth, and being a prolific bearer. The fruit is represented as large, highly colored and delicious in flavor. Being sold fleshed, it is a long keeper and good shipper. The Harrison nurseries make a specialty of all kinds of fruits and will cheerfully send their illustrated catalog to those who write to them for it.

The Latest Discovery in the medical profession is the finding of remedies for the cure of cataracts and blindness by Dr W. O. Coffee, a noted oculist of Des Moines, Ia. He has cured over 5000 blind people in the last year with his remedies, and has now published a book of 80 pages explaining all about his new discoveries, which he sends free to anyone afflicted with eye or ear diseases. Dr Coffee's wonderful cures have created a sensation in Des Moines. He treats the poor free. These remedies can be used at home without seeing the doctor. See his announcement on another page of this paper.

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