

THE merchants of the town of Manitou, in this province, have issued a printed circular, addressed to "the wholesale merchants doing business in Man. Lana." It reads as follows: "Believing it to be a fact acknowledged by all first class dealers, whether by wholesale or retail, and also by trade journals in general that consumers' stores, whether carried on under the name of a 'grange store,' 'patron's store,' or 'farmers store,' are detrimental to the best interests of not only the manufacturer and producer, but also to those of the wholesale and retail dealers, who must have a legitimate profit in order to succeed; and being satisfied that certain wholesale firms are in the habit of selling goods to such institutions, to the detriment of legitimate retail dealers, we, the undersigned merchants and business men of the town of Manitou, respectfully ask if it is your intention to supply such parties with goods, either directly or indirectly, in the future? This is not a question of mere local importance, but one affecting the whole province of Manitoba and if the practice is continued it will be necessary that the names of firms doing that kind of business shall be reported to the secretary of the provincial organization of retail dealers, in course of construction, in order to protect their interests by patronizing only such houses as will answer the above question in the negative." The circular is signed by the merchants of Manitou, to any of whom wholesalers are requested to reply. The Commercial has received no information regarding the issuing of this circular, and has heretofore heard nothing about the proposed organization of retail merchants, mentioned in the circular. The fact that a company composed mostly of farmers, has been lately incorporated to carry on a store business at Manitou, has no doubt led to this action on the part of the Manitou merchants.

### Frozen Beef in Britain.

As the result of experiments which have been carried on for a period of from four to five years, a discovery has just been made which seems likely to have a most important bearing on the future of the trade in frozen meat between Great Britain and her Australasian colonies. Queensland more especially aspires to become our chief purveyor of beef, and, seconded by London importers, has been making most vigorous efforts to obtain a good hold on our markets. This is not surprising, in view of the vastness of her resources. On December 31 last, her stock of cattle was no less than 6,498,600, an increase of over 100,000 on the previous year; while the quotations for live stock at Brisbane yards last July, as recorded in the Australasian Pastoralist Review, were—best bullocks, £3 12s. 6d. to £3 15s.; good bullocks, £3 2s. 6d. to £3 7s. 6d.; and cows £1 10s. to £1 17s. 6d. With such large supplies, at such low prices, the desire of the Queenslanders to supply us with beef will be readily understood. Consignments are now reaching London from three ports in Queensland, and the total arrivals from that colony for the seven months of the present year ended July last were 143,362 cwt., as compared with 89,952 cwt. in the corresponding period of last year. But hitherto Queensland beef has suffered from a most serious disadvantage. The freezing process to which the colonial meat is necessarily subjected affects far more seriously than it affects mutton or lamb,

and experience shows that the Queensland frozen beef is to apt, when served up at table, to be hard, dry, and tasteless. Hence the consumers have been found among the poorest classes, and during the recent "glut" in the London meat market—when fresh arrivals of meat had to be kept on board the steamers because there was no room for them in the refrigerating chambers on shore—Queensland beef was practically unsaleable. In present conditions, indeed, it has little or no chance of competing with American beef, which, not coming so great a distance and not having to cross the equator, is only "chilled", and is therefore not open to the same objections as the Queensland product. When there are superabundant supplies on the market, and more especially when the American is at a low figure, it is the Queensland that goes to the wall. Thus while, as already stated, the total imports of Queensland beef for the first seven months of this year amounted to 168,862 cwt., the imports from America for the same period were no less than 1,055,780 cwt. As for the prices realized, American hindquarters were fetching on August 10, from 5½d to 6d per lb., as compared with 2½d to 2¾d for Australian hindquarters, and 1½d to 1¾d for Australian forequarters. These were, of course, exceptionally low prices, and they have since improved, but they show the inferior position that Queensland beef has had to assume in our markets.

The problem on which a number of minds have been working is how to make Queensland beef a really acceptable article, and how to transfer to our own kinsmen the trade in beef now being done with America. The great difficulty has been to discover some method of thawing the frozen beef which shall overcome the prejudicial effects of the freezing. All sorts of methods have been tried, including the thawing of the meat in a vacuum and even in sea water; but most of them have proved failures. E. Montague Nelson, chairman and managing director of Nelson Bros., Ltd., has, however, at last hit upon a process which he is satisfied will be "commercially successful" and secure the results so earnestly desired. The exact details are being kept secret for the present, but the process is, in effect, one by which the frozen meat is thawed in a warm, dry atmosphere, which also absorbs the moisture, and leaves the meat not only sound in condition, but without that peculiar "wetness" so characteristic of the ordinary frozen meat. By some persons it has been supposed that this "wetness," in frozen beef at least, is due to the bursting of "vessels" in the meat and the consequent running away of the "juices," something after the manner of the bursting of water pipes in winter. The theory is picturesque, but has been scientifically proved to be unfounded. Mr. Nelson holds that the "wetness" in question is due merely to condensation of atmospheric moisture on the frozen meat, in the same way that such moisture condenses on a glass of iced water in a warm room; and he has found that, so far from the "wetness" of the frozen meat being juice, it is nothing more than discolored water, out of which no "stock" can be prepared, as would otherwise be the case. By this thawing process, he claims to be able to get rid of the frost and bring the meat up to the ordinary temperature, so that no condensation will take place and no "wetness" be found, and, at the same time, to insure to the purchaser a good, juicy, palatable, and tender joint.

A small quantity of this thawed beef was on view at Smithfield Market on Friday last week, and was received there with such favour that Mr. Nelson, satisfied with the result of his experiment, has ordered the immediate preparation of rooms where the process can be carried out on a large scale. The cost of the process is estimated at not more than a farthing a pound, while the Smith-

field experts believe that it will put an additional value of, probably, from one penny to three-halfpence per pound on the meat. Should this be so, there ought to be a decided pecuniary advantage not only for the London traders, but also for the Queensland farmers, who complain that at the present prices the trade is most unsatisfactory. Of even greater importance, however, than an increase in price is the expectation that Queensland beef will now be converted from an almost unsaleable article into a saleable one; and as the Queenslanders, with the much lower values of their stock, can put beef on the British markets at a considerably lower figure than the Americans, it is believed that when their supplies have the opportunity of fairly competing with those of the latter there will be a substantial deviation of the trade in favour of the colonists. It is desirable, however, that the Queenslanders should at once organise their supplies on a less intermittent and irregular basis than at present. When Australia sends us 9,109 quarters of beef in January, none at all in February, 5.9 in March, 19,762 in April, 25,421 in May, drops to 128 in June, and then makes a great spurt with 59,111 in July, the best regulated of markets may well be upset.

The process in question though applicable more especially to frozen beef, will have its effect on the trade of frozen mutton as well, for this article, too, has aroused a good deal of prejudice on account both of its "wetness" and of its hardness in eating whenever it has not been properly thawed. When the arrangements now being made are complete the carcasses of sheep will be treated in just the same way as the quarters of beef, the only difference being that whereas the latter will take five days to thaw, the former will be ready in two. Then it is claimed, the last possible objection to colonial mutton will be removed. That this will be good news for New Zealand, which last year sent us no fewer than 1,894,751 carcasses of mutton and lamb, can be readily believed. New South Wales and Victoria also are both doing their best to increase their frozen meat trade with the mother country, and may be expected to be interested as well.—London Times.

### Wheat Feeding to Live Stock.

Wheat is undoubtedly being fed freely to Live Stock in nearly all parts of the United States. Farmers claim that it is more profitable than selling it to millers and shippers. In New York and Pennsylvania, there is considerable wheat being fed to hogs. In Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia, no wheat of consequence is being fed, in Kentucky, however, farmers are feeding freely—some correspondents reporting more eat ground for feed than for flour, and farmers competing with millers for the offerings. In Tennessee, there is some wheat being fed. In Ohio farmers are feeding considerable wheat, claiming they realize 70 to 80c for it. In Michigan, farmers are feeding fair quantities, possibly not as freely as a month ago. In Indiana fair quantities of wheat are being fed—farmers preferring to realize in that way, as being more profitable. In Illinois, farmers are feeding considerable wheat to all kinds of live stock. Farmers are feeding wheat rather freely in Missouri, and also in Kansas and Texas. In Iowa and Nebraska, farmers are feeding a good share of their wheat, and in some sections are buying from dealers. In Wisconsin and Northwest small quantities of wheat are being fed. In Colorado and Utah it is estimated that 20 per cent of the crop will be fed to live stock. Small quantities are being fed in the Pacific States—possibly not more than usual. Correspondents state that in Kentucky fair quantities of wheat are being used by distillers, and also in New York by malsters.—Chicago Trade Bulletin.