

nesslike management is above all things desirable. We have confidence, from what we hear of the plans of this company, that Canadian game, fish, vegetables and fruit may be made more familiar to the Englishman in England than they have ever been before. Of our fruit they know something already, and of our meat and cheese; but of our fish and game next to nothing. It is a shrewd idea to place upon the Old Country market our delicacies as well as our staple foods. The London market alone has a tremendous capacity for such merchandise.

#### EGG DEALERS CAUTIOUS

Recently we made some comments on the generally unprofitable character of the season just closed for eggs. This has been a feature of the trade not only in Canada but in the United States as well. A trade paper published across the line states on seemingly good authority that the loss on cold storage eggs has amounted in Chicago alone to between \$750,000 and \$1,000,000, and taking into consideration the losses in New York, Boston and other large centres, the loss is considered to aggregate very close upon three and a half millions. This estimate does not include sums lost by concerns in small country towns, whose number is legion. In Canada it is difficult to arrive at a definite estimate, because there is no record of the quantity of eggs cold-stored or pickled, but after a fairly careful canvass of the trade we believe it would be within the mark to state that the loss to Canadian dealers will be from \$100,000 to \$200,000. Country dealers and merchants, too, who never cold-stored eggs before, have in many cases had a few hundred cases put away last summer, the reason no doubt being the high prices and good profits which prevailed in the previous winter season.

Early exports to Great Britain, made on contract, are said to have shown some little margin. Later ones, however, thrown on a bad market, resulted in serious loss. The British importers, too, state that they lost money on their contracts, and are very adverse to repeating them this season except at very low prices. A number of the large dealers here have written their consignors to the effect that unless they can buy pickled eggs on a basis of 6/6 to 6/9 c. i. f., they will not touch them preferring to take their chances of the market later on in the season. With the losses that Canadians have experienced this year, the large dealers have determined that unless they can buy eggs at 2 or 3c. lower than last year they will not pickle at all. This means that eggs should be bought in country towns of about 9c. per dozen, for the best estimates calculate that it takes 5c. per dozen to pay for the loss in cracked and small eggs, railroad and ocean freights, cases and fillers, commission and incidental expenses for selling. This would mean that eggs bought even at 9c. would actually cost 14c. before any profit could be obtained by exporting. It may be mentioned that the usual standard for eggs for this purpose is that they should weigh  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. to the dozen, so that poor stock will be out of the running. The range of prices for eggs in New York and Toronto on March 1st during the past few years is presented in the following table:

Year	New York	Toronto	
	Fresh Eggs	Fresh	Pickled.
1898	10 $\frac{3}{4}$ c.	14c.	
1899	14c.	23c.	13 $\frac{1}{2}$ c.
1900	14 $\frac{1}{2}$ c.	17c.	14 $\frac{1}{2}$ c.
1901	14 $\frac{1}{2}$ c.	19c.	15c.
1902	19 $\frac{1}{2}$ c.	28c.	23c.
1903	16c.	16c.	1c $\frac{1}{2}$ c.

It will be seen from the above that the prices for eggs last season were abnormally high. In fact, looking back still further, it is found that they then reached the highest point in more than ten years. The prices quoted for New York are for specially selected No. 1 stock, and indicate quotations on a new-laid basis. Cold storage eggs were selling at this time at anywhere from 5 to 10c. per dozen, and, as stated above, it was in cold-stored and pickled eggs that the serious losses were made. The open season brought large supplies of fresh eggs earlier in the season than usual. From information already coming to hand, it may be gathered that there will be a considerably larger number of eggs produced this year than last, the high prices which prevailed last season having stimulated the raising of hens, the farmers realizing they were one of the most profitable departments of their business. It should be remembered however, that one cause of the high value of eggs last season was the enhanced price of beef and nearly all food materials. This year however, these will be on a lower basis, and, as one consequence, the price of eggs will fall also.

#### COMPROMISING STOREKEEPERS.

Curious it is, how men, keeping general or other stores, who have repeatedly failed to meet their engagements, still appear to wish to continue a losing business, and try to effect compromise arrangements with creditors. Curious, too, that so many farmers, who should be the most independent and prosperous of men, determine to try merchandising for a living. They mostly fail, and who can wonder at it, for they have had, as a rule, no training for storekeeping, which is not as simple a business as it looks. Sometimes they drift into business through the death of a relative who had been a shopkeeper—and it appears to be considered that anyone who can read and write is able to buy and sell goods and make a profit. Sometimes a farmer marries a business, so to speak, that is to say, he marries the proprietress of a business, or marries the widow of a business man and thinks he will be able to replace her husband. Let us cite an instance or two, from our correspondents in Halifax and Quebec this week:

Moise Daignault, of St. Etienne de Beauharnois, Que., was originally a farmer, but about eleven years ago he married the widow of one Crepeau, who had been a general storekeeper, and took up the business of the husband. He did not prove successful, and in 1897 arranged a compromise at 50 cents. He is now reported in trouble again and has assigned owing about \$2,300. A general dealer named Elzear Belleau, at St. Aubert, Que., is reported as offering 55 cents in the dollar, cash, on liabilities of about \$8,000. He is a tinsmith by trade, but thought he was clever enough to keep store and went into general merchandise some years ago. He has always shown a disposition to expand, eventually opening a branch store at St. Pamphile, in the same county of L'Islet, near the Maine boundary. He has been reported much expanded and hard up for some time past, and no wonder. At a place called Coleman, near Alberton, in the north of Prince Edward Island, lived a farmer named W. H. Barr. In 1901 he sold his farm and started storekeeping. In December last he was reported as wishing to compromise, offering 20 per cent. Now he has assigned. Happily, he does not owe much. If he succeeds in getting the compromise he wants, he need only provide himself with \$400, for he is said to owe something less than \$2,000, all told.

#### OUR SAINT JOHN LETTER.

The announcement of the Grand Trunk Railway management that the company's transcontinental line will have its winter port at St. John, has created great interest throughout New Brunswick. While the plans of the company have not been divulged it is recognized that to reach this city from