

An Objectionable Practice Com- plained of.

The Commercial has been requested by a local dealer to publish the following article, which first appeared in the Montreal Trade Bulletin :

We have received a strong protest from a grain merchant in this city against the practice of the Grand Trunk and C. P. R. railway officials giving information to certain shippers and dealers in the city, in some cases days before the actual consignees are notified of the arrival of their goods. Had the communication above referred to been couched in less immoderate terms, we would have published it in full; but in this instance we can only state the purport of its contents in our own words. The dealer in question complained bitterly of the practice of certain parties taking information "to the favored few" every day, which consists not only of the arrival of their own produce, but those of their neighbors, along with the names of the country dealers shipping the goods. This information is claimed to be most disastrous to those receivers who are not notified by the railway officials promptly upon the receipt of their goods. It is asserted that in some instances the shippers of these goods have been communicated with from parties here before the consignees have been notified by the railway companies. Upon making enquiries, however, we find that the railway companies give information to all receivers enquiring about their goods alike, without showing favors to one more than another, and that if merchants receive any information concerning other than their own goods, it is due to parties copying it from the books while getting the particulars of their own goods; and it is difficult to see how this can be prevented, although receivers, one would imagine, should be promptly advised of the receipt of their merchandise, so that the undue advantage which appears to have been taken in many cases by the adoption of the unfair methods above referred to may be obviated in future. One can readily understand how the interests of consignees may be seriously jeopardized if certain parties in the same line of business receive information from the railway companies relative to the business of the rivals, such as the notification of the arrivals of goods in advance and the names of the parties who ship them. This latter information, it seems to us, should certainly be kept private by the railway companies, as it is giving away the business of certain merchants to their rivals in trade, which is anything but right; and we would be inclined to doubt if the railway officials are aware of this being done. That this information has and is being imparted to merchants in this city, regarding the goods of other parties, appears to be a well understood fact; but it is quite possible that it is being done without the knowledge of the heads of the railways.

Fur Trade News.

The Montreal Trade Bulletin says: "Although the warm weather has not been very favorable to the fur business, some shipments have been made by trappers, the principal consignments being skunk and racoon but the season is hardly far enough advanced yet for any large shipments. We quote prices according to quality as follows.—Beaver \$1.50 to \$3.50 per lb; bear skin, large \$15.00 to \$25.00, small \$3.00 to \$10.00; bear cub \$2.00 to \$9.00, fisher \$5.00 to \$8.00; red fox \$1.00 to \$1.75; mink 65c to \$2.00, muskrat, winter 7c to 12c, fall do 5c to 9c; otter \$4.50 to \$11.00; cuts do 25c to \$2.00; racoon 15c to \$1.25; skunk 20c to \$1.50; eastern lynx 20c to \$3.00; Western 15c to \$2.75."

A Montreal correspondent writes: "In the

raw fur trade practically nothing is moving. Prices at present are merely normal, and are likely to rule low in the future. Advances from the other side are not promising at all for any advance. It is useless to give any quotations at present."

At the two days' sale of sealskins in London on Nov. 29 and 30 there was a large attendance of buyers, and there was sold 128,470 Northwest coast skins, 16,081 from Alaska, 27,300 from Copper Island, and 16,080 from the Lobos Islands. The condition of many of the skins offered was not first-class, sufficient care not having been taken in removing them from the dead seals. Owing to the increase in the collection of skins and the trade conditions, a decline in prices was expected. The opening demand was directed exclusively to Northwest coast skins, which declined 20 to 25 per cent., at which figure the competition was active. All parcels with a good growth of fur realized the highest prices, but the average was small. The collection of Alaskaskins brought the usual prices. Copper Island and Lobos Islands skins sold at a decline of 18 to 20 per cent.

London fur sales during 1895 will take place on the following dates: C. M. Lamson & Co.'s sales will be held on January 21 to 25, March 18 to 29, June 10 to 14, and October 16 to 18. The Hudson's Bay Company's sales will be on January 21 and March 18 to 21.

The Fur Trade Review has the following report of the recent London sealskin sales: The Hudson's Bay company offered: Northwest coast, salted, 23,000 skins; Northwest coast, dressed, 1,500 skins, Culverwell, Brooks & Co. offered: Northwest coast, salted, 41,000 skins. C. M. Lamson & Co. offered: Alaska, salted, 16,000 skins; Copper Islands, salted, 27,287 skins; Northwest coast, salted, 40,000 skins. Goad, Rigg & Co. offered: Lobos Islands, salted, 7,000 skins; Cape of Good Hope, salted, 400 skins.

At the Hudson's Bay Company's sale, Northwest Coast fur sealskins sold 20 per cent lower than in January, 1891. Culverwell, Brooks & Company's sale: Northwest Coast sealskins declined about the same as at the Hudson's Bay Company's sale.

AVERAGE PRICES.

	H.B.Co.	C.B.&Co.
Middlings and small	45s.	47s.
Small	44s.	42s. 6d.
Large pups	45s. 6d.	42s. 6d.
Middling pups	43s. 6d.	41s. 6d.
Small pups	37s. 8d.	36s. 8d.
Extra small pups	26s. 8d.	26s.
Ex. ev. small pups	17s. 6d.	18s. 9d.

At C. M. Lamson & Co's sale: Alaskas, 20 per cent. lower than Nov. 1893. Copper Islands, 19 per cent. lower than Nov. 1893. Northwest Coast, 20 per cent. lower than Jan. Prices of Alaska in November, 1893: middlings 89, middlings and smalls 100, smalls 115.9, large pups 10.9, middling pups 107.9, smalls and low 72 shillings.

The New York Fur Trade Review says: "The raw fur market during the past two months has not shown any improvement, but, on the contrary, certain articles, noticeably skunk and especially opossum, for which the prospects were formerly regarded as favorable, have not met with the expected appreciation, and consequently prices rule somewhat lower, with indications of a further decline. This condition of the market may be largely attributed to the fact that domestic manufacturers do not, as heretofore, manifest any particular interest in the new collections, as during the past season they found it a comparatively easy matter to obtain needed supplies of skins from the stocks carried forward from last year. Taking the prices realized at the recent London sales as a standard, it would appear that present values are higher than is warranted by the state of

the market at home and abroad. The receipts of raw furs have been much larger than in previous seasons at the same date, and consequently there is a fairly large proportion of early caught or inferior skins, necessarily resulting in a lower average in values."

The Intercolonial Conference.

A copy of the report of Lord Jersey to the British government on the intercolonial conference at Ottawa is said to be now in possession of the Canadian government. A perusal of it shows that no actual encouragement is given to any of the schemes propounded by the conference. The trade resolution which calls for liberty to make preferential trade arrangements among the colonies themselves in case of the impracticability of preferential treatment of colonial products by Great Britain is treated gingerly by Lord Jersey, who declares the latter proposition "inadmissible," and one which the conference itself did not believe would be agreed to. In fact the resolution itself was opposed by two of the colonies represented. To those who have followed the question, Lord Jersey's report consigns both the fast service and the Pacific cable to a distant and uncertain future.

A New Header.

As if not enough that some of the harvester and binder manufacturers are in sore financial distress a Kansas mechanic has invented and a large concern is manufacturing a "header" weighing 200 lbs. less than the lightest pony binder, cutting a tenfoot swath, and best of all is drawn by two horses instead of being "pushed" by four horses as has been the practice. The experimental machine which cut over a thousand acres in fine style, is only a country smith-shop affair but did its work so well that a prominent and strong concern has secured the patent and is preparing a surprise for the boys.—Farm Machinery.

Winnipeg Clearing House

Clearings for the week ending December 6, were \$1,319,685, balances, \$180,938. For the previous week clearings were \$1,591,210. For the corresponding week of last year clearings were \$1,206,173.

Following are the returns of other Canadian clearing houses for the weeks ended on the dates given:

	Clearings.	
	Nov. 21st	Nov. 29th.
Montreal	\$10,649,246	\$11,549,487
Toronto	4,688,815	6,167,151
Halifax	915,415	1,168,795
Winnipeg	1,590,553	1,595,210
Hamilton	546,213	664,798
Total	\$18,155,247	\$21,140,441

Why Not?

In commenting on causes for reduction of prices of wheat and cotton the New Orleans Picayune concludes as follows: "It will be wise to take warning. Instead of dreaming of the day when wheat will go back to \$1 a bushel, and cotton to 10 cents a pound, it would be the highest wisdom to endeavor so to cheapen the cost of production as to make a profit out of 50-cent wheat and 5-cent cotton. The wise man takes advantage of circumstances to get the most possible out of them. It is useless to cry over the good times that are past. It is necessary to make the most of the present. That is, indeed, all that can be done. Then why not do it?"