

why a man should spend a good many years of his life acquiring a knowledge of a certain subject, and then throw it into the hands of somebody who has not spent any time in that particular pursuit, and it seems to me that in handling package teas we are drifting that way. I have never taken it up myself, and you will excuse me speaking of it from that point of view, but it seems to me that the man who handles package teas is putting a premium upon ignorance. That is after spending years of his life in acquiring a knowledge of his business, he makes it easy for anyone—druggist, drygoodsman, confectioner, saloon-keeper—to handle the tea trade. Brands got in and become known. Jones handles them at a certain price, Smith handles them at a stated price, and Simpson thinks he must handle them at a lower price. Pardon me for referring to this; it is none of my business possibly; but it seems to me that the package tea business is a mistake on the part of the trade, and they would better serve their interest by leaving it alone. Blended teas, understand me, I do not include, I am speaking of package teas with stated brands.

Then there is another thing about which I would like to speak, although I am rather timid of doing so, but it has been before the tea trade a great many years, and it is a fact which we must recognize, and that is, that the tea trade has to a certain extent drifted out of the hands of the grocers. What is the reason for such a thing? There must be some reason and also a remedy. The reason I conceive to be that the grocer as a rule misjudged the proportion of profit which tea should bear. In our anxiety to do business we must have cutting lines; one thing is cut here, another there, under the stress of business—we know how hard it is to hold our trade and make money—until at last it gets so that the poor article of tea must bear a large proportion of the retailer's profit, and that was a great pity. It had its results in taking the tea trade out of the hands of the grocers and putting it into the hands of men who are much less fitted to handle it. We all know to whom I refer—men who call themselves specialists, but who were as a rule much more ignorant of the tea business than the retail grocer, and who also had poorer credit, and were less able to buy good value. But they obtained the trade because I think the retail grocer got into the habit of loading up his tea with too big a profit. I am glad to say, however, that I think the grocer has recognized this, and that he is to-day making an effort to regain his tea trade, and is largely regaining it. It certainly is a thing to be stamped out. Everything should bear its fair proportion of profit, but the grocer makes a great mistake in thinking that he can load up his tea with 50 or 100 per cent. profit. It may stand 50 per cent., but that seems to me to be too much. He can handle his business more cheaply than a pedlar, because his expenses are not so great in proportion to his business, his facilities for buying are better, his credit is better, he can buy better value, and consequently sell better. Forgive me touching on this.

I think I have about concluded now, unless I go into details, advising on certain blends and so on. It is a big subject, and I have considered it under a few headings only, and I think I have said all that I can say in a short time; perhaps I have said too much and detained you too long. If there is any further information I can give you I will be glad to do so. I trust I have offended nobody here; I have spoken frankly; but am not speaking for my own personal business interests, but just what I think on each question. Any questions you may ask me I shall be only too glad to answer in an intelligent manner if possible.

One thing which I did not speak on, but which is of no particular interest to us, as Hamilton grocers, is: Who are the great tea drinking races? You probably know as well as I do, but it may be of interest to some of you to know just how it stands. Who are the biggest tea drinkers in the world, excluding China, as there is no means of arriving at that?

Australia is the greatest tea drinking country in the world; Great Britain stands next; Canada stands third—not bad for us. That was brought to my notice a few years ago. The Australians use two pounds per head more than Great Britain, and Great Britain uses about one pound more than we do. The United States are pretty good tea drinkers, but they come low on the list, as they use a good deal of coffee. The United States stands fourth. Australia uses 63 lbs per head, Great Britain 43 lbs, we use 32 to 4 lbs, and the United States drops down to 1½ lbs, as they drink coffee in the south in many districts.

Russia takes about one pound per head or less. Russia is a country that takes the finest teas in the world; it takes the best of everything, and it also takes the poorest. Splendor and abject poverty are combined in Russia.

Montreal Markets.

Flour—A fair trade transpires in city strong bakers, sales having been reported of good round quantities at \$1 up to \$1.15 to \$1.20 for small lots delivered. Manitoba ground strong bakers has sold at \$3.75 to \$4, and medium bakers at \$3.25 to \$3.50. There is still a fair demand from the lower provinces direct from the mills for Ontario straight rollers at low prices, sales being reported of ordinary straight rollers at \$3.50 to \$3.67 c.i.f. Halifax, N.S., and St. John, N.B. Straight rollers are offered freely at \$3 f.o.b. at the mills west of Toronto. Car lots of Ontario straight rollers are freely offered at \$3.45 on track here and 90 per cents at \$3.55 to \$3.60. Extra is very slow sale, and can be bought at \$3 in car lots on track, and we quote \$3 to \$3.15 as to quantity. Compared with the prices millers in the west are getting for their maritime province orders prices here are very fair. Patent, spring, \$4.20 to \$4.35; put-over, winter, \$3.95 to \$4.15; straight roller, \$3.45 to \$3.65; extra, \$3.00 to \$3.15; superfine, \$2.61 to \$2.83; fine, \$2.25 to \$2.50; city strong bakers, \$1.00 to \$1.10; Manitoba bakers, \$1.45 to \$1.60; Ontario, bags, ex ra, \$1.50 to \$1.55; straight roller, \$1.91 to \$2.00, superfine, \$1.30 to \$1.45; fine, \$1.10 to \$1.15.

Oatmeal—Car lots of rolled oats and granulated offered on track here at \$3.85 per barrel but the quality is said to be not of the best. Best grades, however, can be bought at \$3.95 on track, although some mills ask \$4. There is a fair jobbing business at the following quotations: Rolled and granulated \$4.05 to \$4.15; standard \$3.90 to \$4.05. In bags, granulated, \$2.05 to \$2.10, and standard \$1.95 to \$2.00.

Mil Feed—The market for bran is quiet but steady, with sales of car lots at \$13.00 on track, and we quote the range at \$13 to \$14. Shorts are quoted at \$14.50 to \$15, and moullies at \$19 to \$24 as to grade.

Wheat—In this market there is no business reported on spot. At North Bay sales of No. 1 Manitoba a hard are reported at 80½c, and No. 2 hard at Port Arthur at 64 to 65c. At points north and west of Stratford, red and white winter wheat have sold 62 to 64c, and spring 50 to 62c; goose wheat has been placed at 55c.

Barley.—Sales are reported of 5 cars No. 1 malting barley at 56c, and we quote 48c to 56c. Feed barley is quoted at 33 to 40c.

Oats.—A round quantity of No. 2 oats was offered in the country at equal to 32c laid down here, and refused. We quote \$2 to 33c per 34 lbs., with very little doing on spot. Manitoba white oats are quoted at 39 to 31c North Bay.

Pork, Lard, &c.—In Canada short cut sales are reported at \$19, and we quote \$19 to 19.50, choice heavy short cut mess pork being quoted at \$20 to 20.50. On the basis of the prices paid for dressed hogs, however, Canada short cut mess pork would cost \$21 to 22. Lard is firm, with an upward tendency in prices, and we

quote compound at \$1.60 to 1.70 per pail, and pure Canadian lard \$2 to 2.10 per pail of 20 lbs. Smoked meats are in good demand, hams selling at 11½ to 11½c for large size, and at 12 to 12½c for choice small and medium size. Bacon continues scarce, and sells well at 11 to 12c. Dry salted flanks and bellies 9c, and long clear bacon 9 to 9½c.

Dressed Hogs.—The price of hogs continues very firm, with sales of car lots of choice bright description at \$7.25 to \$7.50. Sales have been made in a jobbing way at \$7.60 to \$7.75.

Butter.—The market is quiet but steady, with some business reported in creamery on export account at 22c. If the shipping demand again sets in to any extent, it will impart a healthier tone to the market all round. In dairy butter a fair volume of business has been done in a small jobbing way at 20 to 21c, single packages of choice selected bringing 22c. In western the market keeps steady at 17 to 19c. Rolled butter receipts have been larger, and prices are easier, sales of western having transpired at 18 to 19c and of Morrisburg at 19 to 20c per pound. We quote prices as follows: Creamery, choice fall, 22½ to 23c; creamery, good to fine, 21½ to 22c; Eastern Townships dairy, choice fall, 20½ to 21c; Eastern Townships good 20c; Morrisburg and Brockville, 19 to 21c; Western, 17 to 19c. About 1c may be added to above prices for choice selections of single tubs.

Cheese.—Sales of finest western Septembers and Octobers have been made at 10½c but holders are now firm at 11c. A few lots of August have sold at 10½ to 10½c. Quite a good enquiry has been experienced over the cable, and if holders choose to accept about 4c less than they are holding at, they could dispose of every box in the city within 24 hours. The situation has a decidedly healthy look. Early cheese on the other side is becoming scarce, and prices for such grades in Liverpool have advanced 1s to 2s. The Liverpool public cable is firm at 53s for finest, although sales are taking place every day at 1s to 2s above that figure.

Eggs.—Montreal limes sell fairly well at 16c to 17c. Western limes have been placed at 14½ to 15½c. Held fresh are quoted at 18 to 20c as to quality, and new laid at 22 to 24c.

Dressed poultry.—Sales of turkeys have taken place at 9 to 10c, the latter figure for choice large birds. Although the demand has been a little slow, an improved business is expected if cold weather sets in after the late snow fall. Choice young chickens are sought after, and meet with a ready sale at 8c, while old hens only bring from 5 to 6c. There is not much demand for geese, which are quoted at 6c for choice dry picked, with sales of scalded at 5c per lb. Ducks are a little scarce with sales at 8 to 9c.

Apples.—Round lots of winter varieties quoted at \$2.25 to \$2.75 as to quality.

Dried Fruit.—Dried apples 4½ to 5c, evaporated 6 to 7½c; dried peaches steady and meeting with good demand at 14 to 15c. Apricots, domestic good at 14 to 14½c. Evaporated vegetables in large cases at \$4. Evaporated peaches are selling at from 13 to 14½c per lb.

Fish and Oils.—Cod oil is firm, 36 to 37½c being the current rates for Newfoundland. Gaspe is quoted at 35c and Nova Scotia 33 to 34c; cod liver oil is firm at 65 to 70c. In seal oil, steam refined is quoted at 26 to 37c for pale and 34 to 35c for straw. Pickled Fish—Green cod is quoted at \$4.75 for No. 1. Large is quoted at \$5 to 5.25, and draft \$5.25 to 5.75. Dry cod is firm at \$4.50. Herring are quiet, fine Canso and Cape Breton August and September catch being quoted at \$4.50. Smoked Fish—Yarmouth bloomers \$1.25 per box of 60; smoked herring 12½c per box; boneless cod fish 5½ to 7c, and fish, 3½ to 4½c.—Trade Bulletin, Dec 16.

An extension of the clock's usefulness has been sought by a St. Petersburg inventor. His dial is a human face, whose mouth, by a phonograph attachment, is made to call out not only the hour, but any directions that may be left with the apparatus.