

Commercial.

MR. DONALD STRONACH (on behalf of the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company, Limited), reports for the week ended February 22, as follows:—

Fat Cattle.—122 head were yarded for to-day's market, but of these the larger proportion were light and of medium quality, only a few being really prime. At the start competition was fairly active and prices about equal to last week's, but as the sales progressed there was less demand and prices lower. Best bullocks brought £6 15s to £8 15s; light and medium, £4 5s to £6 10s; cows, £3 15s to £7 7s 6d.

Fat Sheep.—2,352 were penned, all cross-breeds, the bulk of which were fair quality. Butchers were well supplied, having bought freely last week, so that the demand was not quite so active except for a pen or two of prime wethers, which brought up to last week's top price. Inferior, however, were some what slow of sale, and several pens were turned out unsold. Best cross-bred wethers brought 6s 3d to 7s 6d; one pen, 9s; medium, 5s 6d to 6s; best do ewes, 5s 9d to 6s 3d; medium, 4s 6d to 5s 6d.

Fat Lambs.—336 were penned. This supply was a long way in excess of requirements, resulting in dull competition and low prices. Towards the close of the sale it was difficult to effect sales at any price; best quality brought 5s 6d to 6s 6d; others 3s 3d to 5s 3d.

Pigs.—104 were penned. The most of these were suckers and stores, only a few porkers and bacon pigs. The demand was fairly active, and prices realised slightly in advance of last week's. Suckers brought 4s to 7s 9d; stores, 13s to 18s 6d; porkers to 33s; baconers, 38s to 42s; one very heavy pig, 76s.

Store Cattle.—There is no apparent improvement in the demand for these, and no sales of any consequence transpiring. There are several lots on offer, but very little inquiry.

Store Sheep.—Young cross-breeds (2, 4, 8, and 6-tooth) are in somewhat better demand, but as only a very few of this class are offering sales are limited. The only inquiry for merinoes is for aged sheep by tallow renderers, at prices from 9d to 1s 6d, according to quality, distance, and date of delivery.

Sheepskins.—There was a very full attendance of buyers at our usual weekly sale on Monday, when we offered a good catalogue, nearly all butchers' green skins, for which there was keen competition, all the best lots on the catalogue realising 2d to 3d over last week's prices. There were only a few dry skins, but biddings were not quite so spirited for these. Dry cross-breeds, low to medium, brought 10d to 2s 10d; do. merinos, 8d to 2s 8d; good to best cross-bred, 3s to 4s 9d; do. do. merinos, 2s 9d to 4s 3d; dry pelts, ½d to 4d; butchers' green cross-breeds, 1s 5d, 1s 7d, 1s 8d, 1s 10d, 1s 11d; do. do. merinos, 11d to 1s 1d; lambskins, 1s 11d, 2s, to 2s 4d.

Rabbitskins.—We offered a few lots on Monday, when competition was fairly active, but, as the consignments consisted chiefly of inferior and mixed summer skins, prices were comparatively low, viz., 4d to 5d per lb.

Hides.—A good demand exists and late rates are easily procurable for all lots coming forward. Heavy hides in good condition, clean and free from cuts, have the preference, and realise 3½d to 4d; medium, 2½d to 3½d; light, 2½d to 2¾d; bulls, slipper and inferior, 1½d to 2d per lb.

Tallow.—The market has been quiet during the past few weeks especially with regard to the demand for local consumption, and prices lower for mixed and medium parcels, while fine quality mutton tallow could easily be placed at late rates for shipment; but parcels of this quality fit for the purpose are unobtainable in the meantime. We quote—Inferior and mixed, 10s to 12s; medium, 13s to 15s; good to prime mutton, 16s to 18s; rough fat, inferior, 5s to 7s, medium, 8s to 9s; best caul, 10s to 11s per cwt.

Grain.—Good progress is being made with the harvest, and although some heavy showers fell on Saturday and Sunday there are indications of favourable weather prevailing. Farmers south are still busy with the reapers, having had no time to thresh; but a few truck-loads of wheat have been received from the north, which shows good condition. The demand for wheat is very weak, millers only purchasing enough for present requirements; prices are also lower this week. We quote prime milling, 3s 9d to 4s; medium to good, 3s 6d to 3s 9d; inferior and fowl, 2s 9d to 3s 3d (ex store, bags weighed in).—Oats: Samples of the new crop are now in the market, but prices offered are 1½d to 2½d lower than those paid for full bright old oats. There is a good demand for milling sorts. At public sale on Monday, bright milling realised 1s 10d; good short feed, 1s 7½d to 1s 8½d; medium, 1s 6d to 1s 7d; musty and inferior, 1s 1½d to 1s 5d (bags weighed in).—Barley: The market is still without any new, and until the season is further advanced we do not look for much improvement in the demand.

Grass Seed.—Parcels of the new crop of ryegrass seed are now coming to hand daily, some of these being of only medium colour and rather dirty. There is no demand. A few consignments have been forwarded to Australia, but the result is yet unknown. Old pasture machine-dressed is offering at 3s 6d per bushel. There is no inquiry for cocksfoot in the meantime, although further on we look for some demand.

Mr. F. MEENAN, King street, reports—Wholesale prices, bags included: Oats, medium to prime, 1s 6d to 1s 10d. Wheat: milling, 3s 8d to 4s; fowls', 3s 3d to 3s 6d. Barley: malting, 2s 9d to 3s; milling, 2s 6d; feed, 2s 3d. Chaff, best, £3; straw chaff, dull of sale, nominal. Straw, £2; hay, orten (old), £5; ryegrass (new), £3 to £3 10s. Bran, £3 10s. Pollard, £4. Potatoes: kidneys £2 10s to £3; Derwents, £2 15s. Butter: fresh, 6d to 9d; salt, nominal, 6d. Cheese, 4d to 5d. Eggs, 1s. Flour: sacks, £10 10s; 50lbs., £11. Oatmeal, £9 10s. Roll bacon, 6d; sides, 6½d; hams, 9d.

GRAIN REPORT.

MESSERS. SAMUEL ORR AND CO. Stafford street, report for the week ending February 23 as follows:—Wheat: Since last reporting, the market has in no way improved, as there have been large parcels of new offering from the north and some from south. Millers will not offer unless for small quantities, and then at a shade under late quotations. We look for very little business being done until the market steadies down to a price. Our quotations are—prime, up to 4s 1d; medium, 3s 6d to 3s 9d; inferior and fowls' feed, 3s 2d to 3s 5d.—Oats: Samples of the new crop are now in the market, but prices offered are 1½d to 2d lower than those paid for full bright old oats. There is a good demand for milling sorts. At public sale on Monday, milling realised 1s 10d, though possibly for a prime sample 1s 11d might be obtained. We quote prime milling, 1s 9d to 1s 10d; bright feed, 1s 7d to 1s 8½d; medium, 1s 6d; inferior, 1s 2d to 1s 5d.—Barley: There are still inquiries for malting but, so far, no arrivals, and those on the market first should command a remunerative figure—say up to 3s, bags extra.—Grass Seed: We have to report our having disposed of a quantity at a remunerative figure to growers, but the Northerners seem to be taking the ground from under our feet in shipping direct, the prices realised being so favourable for them. Prices range from 2s 6d to 3s 1d for undressed.—Potatoes: The arrivals during the week have been up to requirements, and nearly all to hand have been sold about last week's rates—namely, £2 17s 6d to £3 5s for prime Derwents.

CANTERBURY CATHOLIC LITERARY SOCIETY.

Christchurch, February 18, 18 7.

THE usual weekly meeting of the above Society took place on Tuesday evening, 15th inst. In the absence of the President, the chair was occupied by Mr. W. O'Shaughnessy, Vice-President, the attendance being good, about forty members were present. After the passing of the minutes, and the transaction of some other routine business, it was proposed and carried that a picnic be held at Sumner on Easter Monday. It was also decided to accept with thanks the offer of Dr. Tivy to deliver a lecture before the Society at some future date. The Secretary was instructed to forward the thanks of the Society to Mr. Percival for a parcel of London *Tablets*, which he had presented. The programme for the evening was of a varied and miscellaneous character, consisting of recitations, readings, songs, musical selections, and a hornpipe or two thrown in, the latter being one of the best appreciated items. On the whole the evening's entertainment was the best of its kind for some time past, there being an evident improvement manifested all through, especially in the elocutionary part, which shows that the classes for the study of this particular branch are making very good progress under the careful training of Mr. Houlaban. The following, among others, contributed to the evenings amusement, Messrs. Courtney, Begley, Belmer, Cummings, Pope, Hennessy. The meeting terminated with prayer in the usual manner.

Four acres of the town of Shenandoah, Pa., caved in with 50 houses, from two to four feet, on account of the weakening of the walls of the colliery over which the town is built.

Mgr. Carini, the professor of the newly instituted chair of paleography at the Vatican, in commencing his course, exhorted the students of the different countries who attend his lectures to compose poems in various languages in honour of the sacerdotal jubilee of his Holiness. The poems will be printed and presented to the Pope.

The Marquis of Ripon reached Hawarden lately on a visit to Mr. Gladstone, where Mr. John Morley had already arrived and Earl Spencer was expected. *The Times* says it is conjectured that the development of the Unionist policy in Ireland has something to do with the sudden gathering of the Liberal leaders at Hawarden Castle.

There is such a thing as unseasonableness, even in the matter of conversion. A priest in one of our Boston parishes tells a half-amusing, half-amusing experience of his own, when he was awakened at one o'clock in the morning, some time ago, by a furious ringing at his door-bell. On answering the call, he found that his untimely visitor was a man who wanted to "take the pledge" there and then. Although he bore evidence that the reform would not be out of place, the acuteness of his remorse was hardly appreciated by the good pastor.—*Pilot*.

In Austria, Count Taaffe has been Prime Minister to the Cisleithan Monarchy since 1870. Count Taaffe is an Irish peer, whose family have been settled in Austria since the deposition of the Stuarts. He is by far the most influential personage in the Empire, for the Emperor has the strongest affection for him, treats him *en camarade*, and takes his advice in all things. He is a short, stoutish man, with a rather Italian head, long, straight black hair, a skipping sort of walk, twinkling eyes, and a Rabelaisian mouth, broadened by continual smiles.

Father Labelle, who is the head and front of the schisme, bring the French Canadians back to Canada from the United States, by offering them farms in the Province of Quebec, expresses confidence in being able to bring a greater number of his countrymen back next year than he has done any year since the beginning of the undertaking. He is devoting all his time to the work. A gentleman to whom I spoke assured me, says a correspondent, that more than 100,000 French Canadians have been brought back from the United States since 1880. He said it was owing to this fact that the French Canadians had so suddenly become a political power in the Protestant province of Ontario. "From being a handful a few years ago," he said, "the French Canadians now number 130,000 souls in that province." Pamphlets in large quantities are, he told me, sent from Montreal to the different French Canadian settlements in the various States of the Union, and special inducements are offered to those who will return.