

Commercial.

MR. DONALD STRONACH (on behalf of the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company, Limited) reports for the week ending February 27 as follows:—

Fat Cattle.—An unusually large number came to hand to-day at Burnside. 326 head were penned for sale, over and above about 100 head which came to the outside gates, and no further. There was a good display of prime beef, only a very few of medium quality; but owing to this supply being so much beyond actual requirements competition was dull. Best bullocks brought £6 17s 6d to £8 7s 6d; ordinary, £3 15s to £9 10s; heifers and cows, £3 2s 6d to £8 10s.

Fat Sheep.—1658 were penned, including about 200 merino wethers useful mutton. Best crossbred wethers brought 9s 9d to 11s 6d; a couple of pens extra prime, 12s 9d; ordinary 8s 3d to 9s 6d; best do ewes, 9s 6d to 11s; ordinary, 6s 9d to 9s; merino wethers, 4s to 6s.

Fat Lambs.—479 were penned. Prices ruled slightly higher than last week. Best made to-day 7s 6d to 8s 9d; others, 5s 6d to 7s.

Pigs.—148 were penned, mostly suckers, for which there was less demand, and prices realised considerably lower. Porkers and baconers, owing, no doubt, to the few forward, had better attention. Suckers brought 7s to 13s 6d; porkers, 38s to 42s; baconers, 14s to 55s; extra heavy, to 65s.

Store Cattle.—The demand is less active, and the season being now so far advanced, feed will be going back. Very little business is likely to be transacted until after harvest, when no doubt supplies will be required for winter feeding.

Store Sheep.—The market now is assuming a somewhat more active tone, as a considerable amount of business is being put through. A good demand exists for all sorts, and with slight concessions on the part of holders, the number in first hands is being daily reduced. It is therefore quite evident that in the course of another fortnight or so the supply, if not exhausted, will be nearly so, and those who have not already secured their requirements are almost sure to go short.

Wool.—The first London series of 1889 closed on the 19th inst., and it is satisfactory to learn that the market displayed a decided firm tone up to the last, with an advance in values of $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1d per lb on all sorts except medium and inferior greasy merino, which, unfortunately, receded $\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb. Coarse crossbred being unchanged. The sales comprised about 235,000 bales, of which only 1,400 have been held over for future disposal. One hundred and twenty-four bales were sent to the Continent, and 6,000 for America. Locally no business of importance is taking place, and only the tag ends of clips now coming into stock. Our usual sale will be held on Thursday, 7th March.

Sheepskins.—These are in brisk demand, both dry and green having good attention. On Monday, as usual, we offered a full catalogue, comprising various classes. There was a full attendance of the trade, and spirited competition for every lot offered, the whole being cleared at prices which showed an advance on those obtaining last week. Dry crossbreds, low to medium, brought 1s 3d to 3s 8d; do do merino, 1s 2d to 3s 5d; full-wooled crossbreds, 3s 10d to 5s 6d; do do merino, 3s 6d to 5s; dry pelts, 2d to 4s 1d; green do crossbred, 2s 6d, 2s 4d, 2s 3d, 2s 2d, 3s 1d, 2s.

Rabbitskins.—Owing to the limited supply the business done in these is unimportant. The odd lots that do come to hand are saleable and realise prices leaving but little margin to shippers. On Monday we placed a few lots of summer skins and suckers. The former brought 5d to 6d; but the latter only 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb.

Hides.—A moderately good demand exists, but there is no quotable alternation in values. All the consignments coming to hand are chiefly taken up for local requirements at prices which shippers do not consider themselves justified in giving, and therefore are almost entirely out of the market. We quote heavy weights free from scars and offal, over 60 lbs. 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d to 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ d; medium, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d to 3d; light, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d to 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ d; inferior slippy and bulls, 1d to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb.

Tallow.—A good demand exists. All the local manufacturers purchase freely, but, in sympathy with prices now ruling in the London market, lower prices have to be accepted. We quote prime mutton, 21s to 22s; medium to good, 19s to 20s; inferior, 13s 6d to 18s; rough fat, best caul, 17s to 18s; good to prime, 15s 6d to 16s 6d; inferior to medium, 10s to 15s per cwt.

Grain.—Wheat: There is very little, if any, prime milling wheat in first hands, but the demand has in no way improved since date of our last report. A moderate quantity of medium is still on the market, a few small lots of which are occasionally disposed of, but at very unsatisfactory prices to sellers. Inferior and low wheat are also in good supply and lower, and as buyers are only purchasing to meet immediate requirements, depending on the advent of the new grain—which, weather permitting, will ere long be on the market—very little business is being done. We quote prime milling, 3s 3d to 3s 6d; medium to good, 2s 10d to 3s 2d; inferior and fowl wheat, 2s to 2s 9d (ex store).—Oats: Stocks now in first hands are reduced to a very small compass. A considerable quality has been placed during the past week owing to growers being unwilling to hold out any longer. There are very few buyers and they operate only when suitable inducements are held out by sellers. The tone of the market is rather unsatisfactory. Small lots occasionally demand fair prices but large sized parcels could not be placed at the same figures. Millers are purchasing small lines suitable for milling, just sufficient to keep them going for the time being, expecting the new grain to be in the market immediately, and obtainable at lower prices, which is almost sure to be the case. Should growers insist on immediate sale, meantime, we quote—prime milling, thin skinned, stout and bright, 2s 4d to 2s 5d; best short bright feed, 2s 3d to 2s 4d; medium, 2s to 2s 2d, inferior and musty, 1s 8d to 1s 10d, ex store.—Barley: Samples of the new crop are now being offered, but no business of any consequence has as yet resulted. Growers want offers, and the demand

not being exceedingly brisk, buyers are not inclined to make prices. Sales of good quality (new crop), are said to be made at 2s 6d, f.o.b. Lyttelton, and if that is so prices here will not be very much higher.

Grass Seeds.—There is no alteration to quote in the tone of the market for ryegrass seed, which still continues dull—no sales of any importance being effected. Quotations, nominal, parcels of undressed are held for 2s 9d to 3s; dressed, 3s 6d to 3s 9d. There is little or nothing doing in cocksfoot.

Potatoes.—The market is fully supplied with inferior and medium while the supply of good Derwents is rather bare, and would sell readily at £4 10s to £4 15s; others at reduced prices.

Dairy Produce.—The market is unchanged for both cheese and butter. The continued dry weather is beginning to seriously affect the quantity produced of the latter, and considering the quantity shipped to the London market, the prospect seems better for the stock on hand.

GRAIN AND SEED REPORT.

MESSRS. SAMUEL ORR AND CO., Stafford street, report for the week ending February 26, as follows:—

Wheat.—Opinion is a little divided as to the prospect of the opening of the market, but in the North sales have been made at from 3s 3d to 3s 6d for prime milling. We quote prime milling up to 3s 4d; medium, 3s to 3s 3d; fowls' feed 2s 6d to 2s 11d.

Oats.—The demand has been fairly active, and we quote—prime milling, 2s 3d to 2s 4d; ordinary, 2s to 2s 2d; inferior, 1s 9d to 1s 10d.

Barley.—During the week a good few samples of the new crop have arrived from the North, and have been sold at satisfactory prices. We quote prime milling up to 4s 3d, sacks extra.

Chaff.—Market fully supplied and prices ranging from £3 5s to £4, according to quality.

MESSRS. ARTHUR M DONALD AND CO. report as follows for the week ending Wednesday, 20th February:—

Sheepskins.—Full-wooled skins, 6d to 6d per lb. for best, and 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d to 5d for medium and inferior. Lambskins find ready sale at 1s 10d to 2s 6d.

Hides.—Prime lots of country ox sell at 3d to 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d; medium, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d to 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ d; inferior, 2d to 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d; bulls' and slippy, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d to 2d.

Hemp.—A strong inquiry exists, and business has been done at £21 to £21 10s for large lines in shipping condition. Tow sails at £4 per ton.

Butter.—Prime, 8d to 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb (kegs extra). Medium and inferior unsaleable.

Ryegrass.—3s per bushel (bags extra); medium and inferior is rather neglected.

Cocksfoot.—A good export demand exists. Prime wanted at 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb (bags extra).

Grain.—As none of the new crop is yet to hand, very little business is passing.

MR. F. MEENAN, King street, reports:—Wholesale prices, bags included: Oats: 2s to 2s 3d, nominal. Wheat: milling, 3s 6d; fowls' 2s 6d to 2s 9d. Chaff, £3 10s to £4. Hay, new oaten, £3 10s; ryegrass, £3 10s. Bran, £3 15s. Pollard, £4 5s to £4 10s. Flour, stone, £10 to £10 15s; roller, £10 10s to £11 5s. Potatoes, Derwents, £4 10s; kidneys, £4 10s. Oatmeal, £12 10s. Butter, fresh, 8d to 10d; salt, nominal, 7d. Eggs, 1s.

During the year 1888 383,595 immigrants were landed at Castle Garden, New York, an increase of 1,977 over the previous year.

The three German Emperors have received from the Berlinese the following soubriquets.—The Kaiser Wilhelm I, that of "der Greise" (the Aged); Kaiser Frederick, that of "der Weise" (the Wise); while the present Emperor has been nicknamed "der Reise" (the Gadebout.)

Ex-minister Edwards Pierrepoint, writing in the *North American Review* for December, mentions a conversation which he had with Lord Beaconsfield 11 years ago, in which the great Tory premier spoke of the necessity of settling the Irish question, and said that "if he had to deal with the situation he should propose to place Ireland in a similar relation to the Imperial Government that New York holds towards the Federal Government, differing in many particulars, on account of the different conditions, but, in the main, similar." Alluding to the need of recognising sentiment as a factor in politics, he said: "Cromwell undertook to govern Ireland in the blood and iron way, but failed." "I replied," says Mr. Pierrepoint, "but he brought peace, did he not?" He said "Yes, the peace of death." The rule of Charles I. was better. The Irish are susceptible to kindness and full of sentiment—not logical—and inconsiderate of the means necessary to gain desired ends, but easily governed if dealt with in the right way."

Alderman-elect Duffee, who is a plumber, stood over a 40 pound charge of dynamite, December 16, while a man in a bomb-proof safe distance away, worked an electric battery for 10 minutes, trying to make the dynamite go off, and wondered why he couldn't. He was only by singular good fortune that the Alderman escaped. He was doing same work at the new Stafford mill, and while waiting for his assistant to return with material he walked across the street to the ledge from which the building stone was being taken out. He went down into the ledge, and was absorbed in the contemplation of a fissure in the rock, when he observed a man carefully crawling towards him on hands and knees. It was the man who had tried to fire the blast, and he was examining the wire to find out what the trouble was. When he discovered the Alderman he staggered to his feet, and when he could command his tongue, told him his situation. The Alderman nearly fainted from fright, and had quite recovered his equanimity yet. It was found that his boot heel had rested directly on the wire, thus grounding it and preventing the blast from exploding.