

Commercial.

THE NEW ZEALAND LOAN AND MERCANTILE AGENCY CO., LIMITED report for week ending April 6, as follows:—

Store Cattle—The demand is not exceedingly brisk, and no sales of any great importance recorded. Small lots now and again change hands, and if prices were agreeable to buyers a much larger number would be placed.

Store Sheep—Less business being transacted privately, but large numbers continue to be offered at auction week after week, and so far prices remain very firm.

Sheepskins—Demand continues good, both dry and green being in good request. Moderate catalogue, very full attendance of buyers, spirited competition. Green crossbreds and lambskins continue to receive the best attention. Country dry crossbreds, inferior to medium, brought 1s 10d to 3s 9d; do do merino, 1s 8d to 2s 10d; full-woolled crossbreds, 4s 8d to 5s 11d; do merino, 3s to 5s 3d; dry pelts, 2d to 1s 7d; best green crossbred pelts, 2s 3d to 2s 8d; selected, 2s 9d to 3s; medium to good, 1s 10d to 2s 2d; green merino pelts, 1s 4d to 1s 9d; green lambskins, best, 2s 5d to 2s 10d; medium to good, 1s 10d to 2s 4d each.

Rabbitskins—Business is not of very much importance. Summer and autumn skins brought 5d to 7½d; suckers and half-grown, 1½d to 4d per lb.

Hides—Market fully supplied with light hides, which are difficult to place. Heavy hides continue scarce. Heavy, 2½d to 2½d; extra do, 65lbs and over, 2½d to 3d; average prices for country hides, 1½d to 2d; light, 1½d to 1½d; inferior and slippy, ¾d to 1d per lb.

Tallow—A fair demand exists. Consignments are placed immediately on arrival, chiefly for local consumption. Best rendered mutton, 19s 6d to 20s; medium to good, 16s to 18s 6d; inferior to medium and good, 13s 6d to 15s per cwt.

Grain—Wheat: Moderate demand exists for really prime milling sorts for local consumption, but there is no inquiry for export. Northern tuscan and velvet, 4s to 4s 3d; good to best, 3s 6d to 3s 9d; medium to good, 3s to 3s 3d; good whole fowls' wheat, 2s 9d to 3s; inferior and broken, 1s 9d to 2s 6d (ex store, sacks weighed in, terms).

—Oats: Now arriving more freely. Demand almost entirely confined to milling sorts. Best bright, stout milling, 1s 6d to 1s 6½d; extra prime, 1s 7d; best short feed, 1s 5½d to 1s 6d; medium to good, 1s 4½d to 1s 5½d; inferior, 1s 2d to 1s 3½d (ex store, sacks extra, net; ¾d per bushel extra f.o.b. Dunedin).—Barley: Very few samples of malting as yet to hand. Prime malting, 3s 1d to 3s 3d; medium, 2s 9d to 3s; feed and milling, 2s to 2s 6d (ex store, sacks extra, terms).

Grass Seeds—Demand for rye-grass seed has fallen off almost to nothing, and no business of any consequence passing.

Potatoes—Market glutted and sales difficult to effect. Derwents 37s 6d to 42s 6d; others 30s to 35s per ton.

Chaff—Supply in excess of requirements, resulting in a fall in price which is not likely to be recovered this season again. At auction on Monday 55s was top price for good sheaf and well cut, smutty and inferior sold at 21s to 35s per ton.

Dairy Produce—The tone of the market is firm but there is no advance in prices which were for factory made cheese, medium size 4½d to 4½d; loaf shape, 4½d to 4½d; dairy made, 3d to 4d per lb. Prime salt butter, dairy made, 7½d to 8½d; factory, 10½d to 11d per lb.

Flax—Sales effected now are at a considerable reduction in prices lately quoted, and buyers indifferent. Quotations now are for inferior, L12 10s to L13; medium, L13 10s to L14 10s; good, L15 10s to L16 10s; really prime a shade more per ton.

MESSRS STRONACH BROS AND MORRIS report as follows for week ending April 6:—

Fat Cattle—Demand for good quality was fairly active. Ordinary had less attention. Best bullocks brought L7 5s to L8 17s 6d, light weights, L4 to L5 7s 6d; best cows, L5 17s 9d to L6 12s 6d; medium L4 10s to L5 10s; light, L2 17s 6d to L3 17s 6d.

Fat Sheep—Competition was fairly active, but towards the close medium sorts were not so keenly competed for.

Fat Lambs—Good competition; brought up to 13s.
Figs—Large entry. Suckers 5s to 9s, slips 10s to 14s, stores 15s to 19s 6d, porkers 21s to 26s 6d, baconers 28s to 36s, extra heavy 42s.

Store Cattle—Odd lots are being placed, but the demand is not strong, half-bred cattle more easily placed.

Store Sheep—Good demand still experienced for mostly all classes, but the number now offering is much less. Prices for all sorts are very firm.

Sheepskins—Demand continues very active, and prices compared with those of last week are fully higher.

Rabbitskins—Good demand, but the business transacted small.

Hides—Moderately fair demand exists, all coming forward being easily placed.

Tallow—Demand continues fairly good for both local requirements and export.

Grain—Wheat: Market still continues void of animation, and transactions during the week have been unimportant, the few sales effected being in buyers' favour.—Oats: With a moderately fair demand on the part of millers and shippers prices have remained firm.—Barley: Market still continues flat, and only occasional transactions passing.

Grass Seed—Demand for rye-grass seed is less active, and not likely to improve until spring requirements set business again on the move.

Potatoes—Supply slightly heavier which has weakened prices.

Chaff—Supply no more than sufficient for requirements. Prices firm.

MESSRS DONALD REID AND CO report having held their usual weekly sale on Wednesday, March 29:—

Rabbitskins—Prices fairly satisfactory.

Sheepskins—Prices brisk. Green crossbreds, 2s 1d to 3s 2d; do merinos, 1s 11d to 2s 2d; do lambs, 2s to 2s 7d.

Hides—No sales to report.

Tallow—All meet with ready sale. Rough fat, 13s per cwt.

Wheat—Business dull. Prime milling, 4s 1d to 4s 3d; medium do, 3s 10d to 4s; inferior do, 3s 6d to 3s 9d; fowls' wheat, 2s to 3s.

Oats—Good inquiry for bright Sutherlands, sparrowbills, and long oats at quotations. Bright long oats, 1s 6d to 1s 8d; do Sutherlands, 1s 6d to 1s 6½d; do sparrowbills, 1s 5d to 1s 5½d.

Barley—Few lines placed during week at for—Malting, 2s 10d to 3s 4d; milling, 2s 3d to 2s 6d.

Potatoes—The market glutted. Prime, L1 17s 6d to L2 2s 6d; inferior, L1 10s to L1 15s.

Chaff—A large supply of inferior and rough chaff has come forward, and prices have fallen rapidly. We quote—Prime, L2 10s to L2 15s; rough and light, L1 10s to L2.

DUNEDIN HORSE SALEYARDS.

MESSRS. WRIGHT, STEPHENSON AND Co. report as follows:—Good young sorts from the country are always saleable, and we still have numerous inquiries for young, active spring cart and van horses. During the week we have also had inquiry for useful plough horses, and as soon as the harvest is over we expect there will be a strong demand for that class. We quote:—For first-class draughts (extra-heavy) L25 to L30; good ordinary draughts (young), L18 to L22; medium draughts, L12 to L16; aged draughts, L6 to L10; good hacks and harness horses, L12 to L16; medium hacks and harness horses, L7 to L9; light and inferior hacks and harness horses, L2 10s to L5.

MR F. MEEHAN, King street, reports:—Wholesale prices—Oats: 1s 4d to 1s 6½d (bags extra), demand quiet. Wheat (casier): milling, 3s 9d to 4s 2d; fowls', 2s 6d to 3s 6d, sacks included. Chaff: Market, fair supply—£2 0s 0d to £2 15s 0d; hay, oats, £3 0s; ryegrass, £3. Bran, £3 0s. Pollard, £4 0s. Potatoes, kidneys, new, local, £2; derwents, £2 5s 0d. Flour: roller, £11 to £11 15s; stone, £10 5s to £10 15s. Fresh butter, 8d to 11d; salt, nominal for prime, 8½d. Eggs, 1s 6d. Oatmeal, £8 15s 0d in 25lbs; bulk, £8 0s.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY IN AUCKLAND.

(Auckland Star, March 21.)

OWING to the downpour of rain on St. Patrick's Day, the children's annual feast was held at Panmure instead of Howick as first arranged. The gathering of children was one of the largest yet seen at any previous celebration. The Messrs Crawford kindly placed their two large 'busses at the disposal of Monsignor McDonald to convey the children, the band, and friends from Howick to the homely village of Panmure, with its attractive lake, well-arranged farms, and last, though not least, that wonder of wonders so frequently visited by tourists, "Mount Wellington," which is in close proximity to the Wellington Park, the property of the enterprising and truly kind neighbour, Thos. Morriss, Esq. In addition to the Howick contingent, the brakes of Messrs J. Pilkington, D. McPherson and F. O'Connor took the children and friends from Ellerslie to the quarter of rendezvous. It should be stated that the members of Father Walter's Fifa and Drum played the contingents on arrival to the Panmure hall (St. Patrick's), when the air resounded with ringing cheers. The two bands, under the able conductorship of Mr J. Smith, discoursed sweet music during the day, to the intense delight of the very big gathering. Various events in the way of races, the capturing and hot pursuit of a greasy pig, manipulated and cleverly captured by Master S. Fleming after a long and trying contest—the same having been offered by Mrs White and Hill for the amusement of the little ones. It is needless to say that this item of the day's performance proved exceedingly amusing. A leg of mutton was also given by Mr T. Gill, Pakauranga, for the quickest to ascend a very high pole. The races between the members of both bands were very exciting, the principal one falling to the lot of Mr Searchfield. The junior members too engaged in well-contested races. The ladies also came to the front, the prizes in this case being a quarter chest of tea and a box of well-selected toys. The commissariat was considered the best ever witnessed by those present, the same being served with Mr Robertson's well-known taste and ability. At an interval, the Monsignor presided, in a few well-chosen sentences, a pretty riding whip to Mr Smith, and a valuable 'bus whip to Mr Crawford. The presents were made on behalf of the children, the Sports Committee and his own. The above gentlemen suitably replied, when ringing cheers were accorded them. A number of Auckland carriages, as usual, put in appearance, and were cordially welcomed by their old friend, Father Walter and the settlers. The Monsignor gave a handsome prize to a baby holding a green whip in its hand.

I should not omit mentioning that a very pleasing event took place during the afternoon, namely, the presenting of seven bright and pretty babies before three ladies, who, after a long and careful examination, decided in awarding the first prize to Mrs T. Dunn's baby, Panmure. The children sang very prettily from time to time some national airs, and were deservedly applauded. The day may be truly regarded as a red-letter day for the children of Howick, Panmure and Ellerslie, as also for their parents and friends. In the

J. FORD & CO., 121 George Street (Near Hanover St), TEA BLENDERS, GROCERS, PROVISION MERCHANTS.—New Muscatels, 1s 2d; New Sultanias, 7½d; New Currants, 5½d; New Valentias, 6½d; New Figs, 8d pot; Prime Hams, 8d; Bacon, 6d. Cheapest House in Dunedin for a good article.