

Commercial

(For week ending December 28, 1904.)

PRODUCE.

London, December 23.—Butter is quiet and weaker. Danish, 113/-; choicest Victorian, 98/- to 100/-; New South Wales, 96/- to 98/-. Prices are nominal owing to the fog preventing the delivery of the bulk of the last Australian consignments; 102/- is asked for the next arrivals from New Zealand.

Wheat.—The markets are quiet, and cargoes are dull; 15,000 quarters Australian January and February ship ments, 32/9.

Invercargill prices current.—Wholesale — Butter farm, 5d; separator, 7d; butter, factory, pats, 10½d. Eggs, 8d per dozen. Cheese (factory), 6½d. Hams, 9d. Potatoes, £2/10/- per ton (bags weighed in). Barley, 2/- to 2/6. Chaff, £2/5/- per ton. Flour, £10/10 to £11/10. Oatmeal, £8/10/- to £9. Bran, £3/15/-. Pollard, £5. Retail—Farm butter, 7d; separator, 9d; butter, factory, pats, 1/-; Cheese, 6d to 8d. Eggs, 10d per doz. Bacon, 9d. Hams, 10d. Potatoes, 4/- per cwt. Flour: 200lb, 23/-; 50lb, 6/6. Oatmeal: 50lb, 5/3; 25lb, 2/9. Pollard, 8/6 per bag. Bran, 4/6. Chaff, 1/6.

WOOL.

DUNEDIN WOOL SALES.

Messrs. Donald Reid and Co. report as follows:—

We held our first wool sale of the season's series at the Victoria Hall, Agricultural Buildings, Dunedin, on Thursday, December 22, 1904, when we submitted a catalogue comprising 1227 bales of crossbred, Leicester, and merino wools, chiefly farmers' lots grown on the Coast districts. There was a large attendance of buyers—English, foreign, colonial, and local manufacturers and wool staplers being very fully represented—who were very keen on business, and competed with much spirit for the different classes of wool offered, which suited their requirements, and this resulted in a brisk and most satisfactory sale. There was also a fair attendance of wool growers, shippers, and others interested in the trade, who evinced a keen interest in the proceedings, and appeared satisfied with the prices realised.

The wools displayed by us were largely composed of clips of sheep which had been wintered on turnips, and these, although well grown and sound in staple, were, with some few exceptions, rather dark colored, earth-stained, and heavy, and lacked the bright, lustrous appearance (so attractive to buyers) which characterises the clip of flocks which have been well wintered on grass pastures. All the wools catalogued by us were, however, comparatively free from tick stains, and the fibre sound and strong, showing that the sheep had been well nourished and cared for throughout the season.

It was quite expected that there would be a substantial rise, estimated at from 1½d to 2½d, in values as compared with those ruling last season, and this satisfactory result was fully secured, chiefly by the brisk competition made on behalf of American trade. Half-breds showed a rise of 1½d to 2½d as compared with the top price of the corresponding sale of last season; crossbreds and Leicesters showed a rise of 2d to 3d, and merinos a rise of about 1d to 1½d per lb.

The total number of bales catalogued by the various brokers for the series was 5627 bales. Of the 1227 bales catalogued by us, 1078 bales were sold under the hammer, 86 bales were passed in, bidding not being up to valuations or reserves, and 63 bales were withdrawn, the clip not being complete.

Bidding throughout our sale was very well maintained up to the values above named, and for special lots of the more lustrous wool there was very animated competition, resulting in one of the best sales it has been our good fortune to conduct, nearly every lot, either at auction or privately afterwards, being placed at full values.

LIVE STOCK

THE ADDINGTON MARKET.

There were full entries at Addington in all departments, comprising 8745 sheep, 695 cattle, and 459 pigs.

Fat Cattle.—About 200 head were yarded, of which a large proportion did not answer to the description of Christmas beef. Really prime beasts were about 10/- per head down from last week's rates, but on unfinished stock the fall was as much as £1, with few buyers. The best beef sold at the rate of 22/- to 23/6 per 100lb; ordinary, 20/- to 21/6.

Fat Sheep.—The entry was large and included some very prime lines of wethers, which met with keen competition from both branches of the trade at full recent values; a good selection of prime ewes, which butchers absorbed at a small reduction; and the usual summer offering of old and heavy ewes, which were not in request, and suffered a fall of 1/- to 2/- from last week's rates. Prices current were as follows: Crossbred wethers, good to prime, 20/- to 23/6; others, 17/6 to 19/6; ewes, good to prime, 18/- to 19/6; extra, to 22/6; medium, 15/6 to 17/6; old, 11/9 to 15/-; merino wethers, medium, 14/4 to 15/9.

Fat Lambs.—There was a large entry, and the quality generally was good. All really fat lots sold at an advance of 6d to 1/- on last week's rates, butchers bidding freely to fill Christmas requirements, while exporters were equally desirous of filling their space in the 'Gothic.' Secondary lines held their previous values, and about 1000 were taken for export, the balance (700) going to butchers. Prime lots made 18/- to 20/-; extra, to 21/8; others, from 14/9.

Store Sheep.—The yarding was the largest for some months. The demand was active, and recent values were well maintained.

Pigs.—There was a large and good entry of fat pigs, and buyers showed some reserve. Prices, however, were fairly well maintained. Prime baconers sold at 38/- to 55/-, equal to 4d to 4½d per lb; porkers at 25/- to 32/-, or 4½d to 4¾d per lb; large stores, 25/- to 30/-; and a few very good Berkshires from Ohaia Island at 32/-; medium, 18/- to 24/-; small, 12/- to 16/-; suckers, 8/- to 10/-.

MASTERTON

(From our own correspondent.)

December 23.

A general meeting of the St. Patrick's Day Sports' Association was held on Saturday evening, when there was a large attendance of members, Mr. M. C. O'Connell presiding. The programme as submitted by the committee was adopted. It provides for the giving of prizes to the value of £130, the two principal events being a St. Patrick's Day Handicap of £35, and a wheel race of £11. Mr. Alec Shannon was appointed handicapper.

Owing to the large district that the Very Rev. Dean McKenna has had to attend to he will in future be assisted by the Rev. Father Kelly, who arrived in the Colony from Ireland a couple of weeks ago. Father Kelly preached his first sermon at St. Patrick's Church on Sunday last.

The ladies' committee of St. Bride's Convent bazaar met last evening. Signor Borvoni wrote notifying that he would be able to commence rehearsals early in January. The ladies reported that they were receiving very liberal support, so that there is every prospect of a very successful bazaar.

Great regret is felt at the departure for Australia of Sisters Claver and Teresa, of St. Bride's Convent. The Sisters have been in Masterton since the convent was started five years ago. They have not been allowed to depart without many marks of the esteem in which they are held.

WAIMATE

(From our own correspondent.)

December 26.

The annual prize-giving in connection with St. Patrick's School took place in the schoolroom on Friday last. Before the distribution took place a number of musical items were gone through by the pupils most creditably.

One of the most successful entertainments ever held in Waimate was given on Tuesday, December 20, in the Oddfellows' Hall, when the members of St. Patrick's Dramatic Club made their first appearance in public. The play selected was the comedy, 'Her Second Husband.' The performance went with a swing from start to finish, being free from long waits and prompting, usually the case in amateur performances. The members are to be congratulated for the way in which they carried out their parts. The following took part in the performance:—Misses Crowley, A. Patterson, Kent, and Costello, Messrs. Sims, Reid, Costello, and Hackey.

On Christmas Day there were Masses at 7 and 9 o'clock, and at 11 o'clock a Missa Cantata was celebrated by the Rev. Father O'Connor. The choir rendered Farmer's Mass in B flat, the soloists being Misses Kent and Sims, Mrs. J. T. Quinn, and Messrs. O'Shea and Goldstone. The church was tastefully decorated, the work of the Sisters of St. Joseph.