

THE EUROPEAN HARVESTS.

THE news from Europe concerning the results of the wheat harvests is interesting and favourable to the American farmer. No where has the yield of wheat during the present year been an extraordinary one, while in many sections it has fallen below the average. This is the case in England, both in the yield per acre and the quality of the produce itself, although the variability in both respects is very great. Thus it is probable that, in view of the present unsatisfactory condition of the English labour market and manufacturing industries, if factors part with their produce now at low rates, they will be compelled to buy in again at higher figures before the close of the season. The amount of wheat afloat at present for the United Kingdom, is about the same as at the corresponding period last year, and the reports of the deficient harvests will be sure to add to the quality. As an offset to the deficiency in the amount of wheat grown, that of the coarser cereals and root crops appears to have been satisfactory, which will doubtless have the effect of limiting the importations of coarse stuff for stock purposes.

Not only in England, but in Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Southern Russia, along the Danube, on the shores of the Black Sea, and in Turkey, has the yield of wheat fallen below reasonable expectations. Spain is stated to be in the same category, and Italy has doubts whether she will not have to import largely of foreign grain. At Marseilles there has recently been a very active consumptive demand, and speculators have bought largely, thus causing an advance in prices. These have also stiffened at Bordeaux and Nantes, notwithstanding the prospect of good yields in the west of France. The Marseilles Chamber of Commerce has also drawn attention to the fact that, although the wheat harvest of 1888 was an average one, the import of grain into France was greater that year than in 1887, when the harvest was bad. This, of course, indicates that at the commencement of 1887, there were liberal stocks to draw from, which had largely decreased before the beginning of 1888. The decrease of supplies drawn from France by England during the latter year may have aided in producing the effect. With England again needing breadstuffs, and no large stock to draw from the last year, it looks as though France would have to import wheat largely this autumn, unless the yield should be an extraordinary one.

Thus we conclude that Europe will buy extensively of our surplus yield of grain during the coming year. During that which ended with August, we exported including flour, 22,000,000 bushels of wheat—an increase of 53 per cent. over the preceding twelve months. For the current year it would not be astonishing were the returns to show a similar gain. At all events a large surplus can be spared, although our own crops will prove in many sections, south and west, a poor one. Still, it should be remembered that Europe has other sources for her supply of grain than the United States, and that prices are forced beyond a certain limit the foreign demand will not respond. There is danger that stocks may be held too long, and the right moment lost through too great avidity in procuring the highest rates. What the money centres on this side of the Atlantic need, is that the grain crops should be moved promptly forward. Such a movement would inspire our capitalists with confidence, by making money easy and place the credit balance on the right side of the international ledger. *New York Albion.*

THE NEED OF RECIPROCITY WITH THE DOMINION.

WE trust that many weeks of the next session of Congress will not be allowed to pass before the introduction of a new reciprocity treaty with Canada. It is now generally conceded that the repeal of the old one was an error, and that it should have been modified rather than altogether abolished. Party, however—that bane of this country—was invoked in the premises, and the anti-British feeling that undoubtedly exists in certain quarters, made to do duty in securing the repeal of the objectionable measure. The real cause of its abolition seems to have been the fear, on the part of certain narrow-minded politicians, that the Canadians were gaining certain advantages over this country, and reaping greater benefits from it than were the Americans. The avowed reason was the alleged unwillingness of the Canadians to make certain concessions demanded by merchants, and others, on this side the border. But whatever the cause, the repeal of the treaty was a mistake. So far as it went, it worked well, and if not liberal enough in its provisions, it could easily have been made so by amendment. Its beneficial working was to be seen in both countries, and the wisdom of the principle of reciprocity was abundantly vindicated by the brief experiment. And what has been the result of the repeal? Our trade with the British Provinces has ever since shown a gradual diminution. Under the treaty the great bulk of the surplus flour and grain of Canada sought an outlet through our ports, thus affording a profitable business to our railways, our commission merchants, and our shipping. This trade has been practically extinguished since the repeal, and the commerce that once flowed into our hands has been forced into other channels. The port of Montreal, for instance, has so greatly profited by the change, that its receipts of wheat this season exceeded those of last year by 331 per cent., while its exports to Europe show an increase of 521 per cent. There has also been a considerable diversion of other agricultural products, such as lumber, &c., which would have greatly increased the volume of our trade, as well as a marked diminution in the demand for American manufactures in Canada.

It is clear, therefore, that a treaty that will reopen to us this diverted commerce, will be of great and im-

mediate benefit. We want the coal, fish, potatoes, butter, cheese and grain of the Province, and they would readily take in return our manufactures, and draw a considerable portion of their foreign importations through our ports. Indeed, there seems no good reason why there should not be practical free trade between us and the Dominion. Our geographical position and the material interests of both countries demand it, while no political exigency that we are aware of renders it dangerous or of doubtful utility. It is true the coal monopolists may object, but the "greatest good to the greatest number" ought to silence their objections. The people have certainly suffered long enough from the exactions of the anthracite coal corporations, to render it a matter of simple justice that every possible avenue of relief should be opened to them. The effective protection fallacies have long enough proved a cloak for rapaciousness, to render their exposure and that of those who use them advisable at the earliest possible moment.

But there is another view of the case especially interesting to our friends in the Dominion. As is well known, great discontent and a disinclination to remain bound to Canada in the yoke of confederation exists in the Maritime Provinces. This discontent is most apparent in Nova Scotia, where earnest efforts have been made to sever the ties that bind that Province to the other British American Possessions. Now, much of this restiveness arises from commercial rather than purely political causes. The trade relations of the Province are naturally with the United States rather than with Canada. When the trade of the Maritime Provinces is shut off from the States and forced down the St. Lawrence, it is given an unnatural direction, and one disadvantageous to the best interests of those Provinces. The best markets for the products of Nova Scotia are the Atlantic seaboard States, as Canada cannot possibly consume them. Hence we have seen potatoes, during the past summer, selling for a mere song in that section, when the ability to ship them free of duty to the States would have returned a fair profit to the grower. Now, if free trade were established many of the grievances of which the Nova Scotians complain would disappear, and content would take the place of dissatisfied. Many of the imaginary ills from which they suffer—and none the less acutely because imaginary—would be forgotten in the return of commercial prosperity, and the mole hills which now reach, in their eyes, a mountainous size, would rapidly resume their natural proportions. We do not say, let it be understood, that the Maritime Provinces will ever be entirely satisfied with their position as members of the Dominion, but we assert that many of their grievances would be forgotten under such a regime as we have indicated. While, therefore, the proposition for a new treaty must come from Washington, the Dominion authorities, if they are wise, will raise no needless impediments in the way of its adoption. That it should be ratified at an early day is for the interest of both countries, and it is to be hoped that no short sighted politicians will be allowed to prevent so desirable a consummation.—*N. Y. Albion.*

CO-OPERATION.

THIS is the watchword now used more than any other by those who are the mouth-pieces of the trades' unions. It means in our day that without further waiting for the employers to concede the general management of their business to their workmen, the latter should take it out of their hands and carry it for themselves. The original significance of the term in this application was far less extensive. It was first employed to designate minor associations for supplying some of the daily needs of work people to save them from what was called the "extortion of middle men." Thus if two or three hundred workmen in a place used coal, instead of buying their supplies from the coal yard of another, they were urged to club their capital and set up a coal yard on their own account. And further, as it is their daily purchases which support the grocery, why should they not open a store on their own account, and supply themselves at cost, or charging themselves the same profit as they now paid the grocer, divide the gain at stated periods *pro rata* according to the amount of their purchases? The same principle is capable of indefinite extension. It might be applied to the hatter and the shoemaker; or if it be conceded that these require more skill, at least it might include dry goods, every establishment where articles are simply gathered for distribution, and no constructive genius is necessary. This was the principle of the first co-operative stores. Here and there one succeeded, but most of them were miserable failures. The reason is obvious to every close observer. The business of collecting and exchanging is as much a trade to be learned as the work of designing and constructing. No man thinks he can shoe a horse without acquired skill and experience, but every one, until he is taught by some bitter lesson, thinks he can keep a store, manage a hotel, or publish a newspaper. These gifts are commonly believed to come by nature, or more general still, to be natural to everybody. The truth is that it requires not only far more special adaptiveness, but closer and more careful training, to be a successful merchant than to be a good carpenter or a skillful blacksmith. The popular ignorance on this subject is probably the reason why in the pursuits we have indicated the large proportion of enterprises fail so disastrously. Not to speak particularly of the other two, it is proved by statistics that of every one hundred who engage in mercantile business, ninety-seven become insolvent. It may be said that in co-operative stores part of the ordinary expenses might be saved. For instance, there need be no advertising for custom and security might possibly be made against losses by bad debts. But on the other hand there are disadvantages. The regular grocers, who have all classes

of customers, are popularly supposed to make their greatest profits out of the very poor who buy in small quantities; but this is a fallacy, as a little actual observation will show. It is true a higher nominal price is paid for a smaller measure, but not more than sufficient to compensate for the increased handling and waste. So that after all, the wealthy or at least the better classes, who buy largely and pay liberally, are the real fountain of profit to most shopkeepers. In the associated establishments there is a larger proportion of the poorer customers, and these buy to a greater extent the more necessary articles, on which the profit is more limited, leaving the luxuries which count up in the regular shopkeeper's gains.

But the greatest cause of failure is in the general bad management. If one of the associates who is competent undertakes to conduct the business, there is jealousy and interference on the part of others. If a clerk is hired and the business entrusted to him it is found that he lacks the greatest stimulus to faithful exertion, an interest dependent on and proportioned to the success; while any attempt to regulate the affairs by a council is sure to muddle the whole concern. The failure of those who give their time and no little acquired skill to such enterprises conducted on their own account, should make us lenient toward those concerns that go to wreck in the hands of an ignorant but well-meaning committee who are superintending them through an ordinary hired clerk or salesman.

But it is now proposed to form associations of workmen, not to furnish themselves with supplies while engaged in other employments, but for the sole purpose of employing themselves at the craft they understand. This has at least one element of success—a knowledge of the practical details of the work to be done, and yet it has been, on the whole, less successful than the other forms of co-operative associations. We need not search far to find the reason of this failure. A knowledge of the mechanical construction of part or all of an article does not necessarily qualify a man for the management of an extensive business in its production and sale. Indeed, it has been proved by experience that a genius for construction is seldom united to the gift which enables a man to control business operations successfully. But even this is not the greatest difficulty. There are too many heads if all have an equal voice in the management, and too little subordination and respect for authority, even if the best man obtains the mastery and has the control. Operate an army on this principle for a short campaign, and no further illustration will be needed.

"And is there, then," asks our grieved reformer, "no good time coming when every man will be his own employer?" We trust not. The present arrangement is the ordering of a higher than human wisdom, and we do not believe that, if a change were possible, the sum of happiness would be thereby promoted. Those who recommend a mechanic, earning fair wages without a care or burden in reference to the conduct of his workshop, to exchange this subordinate place for one in a joint directorship that he may "rise to the dignity of being his own master," may intend to do him a favor, but if he make the experiment he will then learn how cruel is the wrong they have done him. The law of compensations is universal and irreplicable. There is no such thing as independence, and every attempt to remove the "yoke of servitude," if successful, only substitutes a new burden that seems all the heavier, because it falls in a new place not hardened by use. We know that patience, faithfulness and cheerful submission to the daily task seem but tame words to ears that have rung with "the battle cry of freedom;" but they represent the most useful lesson which man can learn in any sphere. The laborer who cultivates any other spirit is rebelling not only against the allotments of a higher power, but is engaged in destroying his own peace, and must suffer the inevitable penalty. This truth is not popular either in the press or the forum, but it is truth, and it will stand for all time.—*N. Y. Journal of Commerce.*

THE COTTON MARKET.—The Memphis *Scm* expresses the following opinion:—"The depression in the price of cotton at this time is not the result of accident. It is known that a variety of causes have tended to reduce the estimate of the year's crop. Last year the crop was 170,333 bales shorter than the year before. The whole crop was over 2,360,557 bales; and notwithstanding the estimate is now as high as three million bales for this year, it is reasonably certain from the depredations of the worm, caterpillar, and drought, in all the cotton growing country, that there will really be less cotton made this year than was made last. Yet in the face of these facts, the 'bears' of the New York market have combined to break down quotations. They have already staggered the market and it is believed that they will yet accomplish their purpose and knock down the price. There are sagacious cotton men who believe that when the deficiency in the crop is fully realized, as it will be by next spring, that cotton will command in the neighbourhood of forty cents. It is evident that the crop must be smaller than that of last year, and of course there is no good ground for bearing the market at present prices.

The *Journal of Chemistry* speaks in high terms of the value of coffee as a deodorizer for the neutralizing of foul odours that emanate from organic bodies in a state of decay, as it can be used to advantage where other disinfecting agents would be inadmissible. In cases where rats die in the spaces between the floors of dwellings, the most intolerable odour arising therefrom can be most effectually removed by placing a pound or two of fresh burnt and ground coffee between the floors. For the purification of the sick room it is incomparably superior to the burning of sage, as it has a beneficial chemical action on the atmosphere of the room, and gives besides an agreeable perfume.