

Wiman tells us that the United States offers the best market for our products. The real problem for her is where to find a market for her own wheat, and the *Bulletin* fears that it is impossible to do so. American farmers must, that authority insists, curtail their growth of wheat, in spite of the fact that many of them have "been compelled to produce more wheat for some years in order to pay off indebtedness and save their farms from foreclosure." It is difficult to believe in the wealth of the American farmer, in the light of these facts, or to see in his condition anything for Canadian farmers to envy.

BANKRUPT STOCKS.

A letter which appears in this issue makes intelligent comments upon some of the ills that the wholesale trade of Canada endure. The returning of goods without adequate reason; the heavy expense of liquidating insolvent estates; the laziness or lack of moral back-bone that leads merchants to apply for a compromise with creditors rather than make an extra effort to save their credit; the selling of bankrupt stocks at auction in village or city, to the detriment of neighboring merchants. All these are evils which every importer sees. Some deplore them in silence—some talk about them—others write about them. No one denies that a way must be found to end them if trade is to be made healthy and reasonable profit secured. But how many houses in a hundred take the firm stand necessary for a cure, that of lessening credits and refusing compromises?

The proposal of "Gloria" is that wholesale dealers form a joint stock company which shall have power to wind up insolvent estates, to collect their accounts, to buy their stocks in and sell them at some central premises chosen for the purpose, the object being to have the objectionable bankrupt stocks distributed amongst bona fide buyers, so that the insolvent shall not get them back for a song. The plan is not new, but it has advocates other than the present correspondent. If any one be able to show a more excellent way, we shall be glad to hear from him. Our readers will remember the discussion on the subject at the Merchants' Convention in Hamilton. It has also been discussed by the Dry Goods section of the Toronto Board of Trade.

IMMIGRATION TO OUR WEST.

A counter current to what has been called the Canadian exodus began to run more than a year ago, and it is acquiring greater volume and force as it proceeds. Manitoba and the Northwest were the first to feel the benefit of this new movement of population from the south to the north. Now another branch of the stream is flowing into British Columbia. The Vancouver *World* thus reports: "The hegira has set in from Dakota, Idaho, Montana, Washington and Oregon. In the interior the travel northward in Kootenay, Spallumcheen and Okanagan sections is truly surprising." And those who have come report that many others are soon to follow. The object of

the new comers is to take up land in a country from which good tidings has reached them. As a rule the Canadians who go to the States do not go to farm. Those who come here do. There is practically no limit to the numbers for whom Canada can find homes. This counter current of population is likely in the near future to far more than balance that which flows southward out of the country. The free interchange of population will be in the interest of both countries.

FLOUR TO THE WEST INDIES.

Some weeks ago, in referring to an item in this journal of date 7th October, headed: "They want better barrels," the *Halifax Herald* made some sweeping statements as to the character of much of the flour Canada is sending to the West Indies, contending that it was not so much a matter of character of package as of quality of flour. The *Herald* alleged, on the authority of a gentleman recently in the islands: "We are overloading the market with the poorer grades [of flour], while the W. I. merchants are willing to pay for the best." Also that bakers on the islands "have become disgusted, and refuse to take the Canadian flour offered at any price;" that even when equal grades of flour are offered by American and Canadian mills, the former are chosen at 25 cents higher because the barrel is a better package, and can be sold when empty for other purposes. It is very important that these things, if true, should be changed for the better.

The opinion of Mr. Weatherston, of the Intercolonial Railway, expressed in our columns, was that the Canadian flour sent to the West Indies was of good quality, and gave good satisfaction. But the *Herald* insists that Mr. Weatherston's information is inaccurate, and reiterates the view that careless packing and imperfect quality had given our flour a bad name.

We learn that about 25,000 barrels of Canadian flour has been shipped to the West India islands within fourteen months ended September last. We knew the shippers of some of it, and set ourselves to find out other shippers, and ascertain their experience of the market, and especially what complaints had been made of Canadian flour. Twelve Ontario millers or dealers have answered. Here are parts of the replies:

No. 1.—"The flour which we find takes the market down there [St. Lucia, St. Kitts, Jamaica, Trinidad, Demerara] is a choice baking flour such as the best we sell in our home market, and choice strong-bakers made of No. 1 or 2 hard Manitoba wheat. Ordinary flours they do not want. We have shipped a little over 5,000 barrels there since opening up trade there last season."

No. 2.—"I have shipped several thousand barrels of flour to the West Indies. They went mostly to Trinidad, St. Thomas and Demerara, and I have yet to hear a single complaint about the quality, but in several cases my flour was highly commended and suited the trade well. I sent the best flour I make. I used the flat hoops on the barrels, and had one or two complaints about the barrels—that was all."

No. 3.—"The flour barrels made in Canada on the average are as good as those made in the States. In the olden times flour in the round-hoop barrels used to bring a higher price, but now the quality of the flour is looked at more than the package. I have

not shipped much to the West Indies, but all that I have sent has given the best satisfaction, and I have not had the slightest complaint about either flour or barrels."

No. 4.—"We have not sent any flour in flat-hooped barrels to the West Indies; all our shipments have been made in first-class round-hooped barrels. We had some difficulty at first in getting these barrels made, but have now overcome the difficulty and can get all we want. We have shipped to Bermuda between 500 and 600 barrels of flour during the past year. This flour has all been a first-class article, and from all reports received it has given good satisfaction."

No. 5.—"We have shipped about 900 barrels flour to the West Indies: 1 c/r to Montserrat, 2 to Martinique, 2 to St. Thomas and 1 to Demerara. We sent a very excellent flour, put up in good barrels, and have reason to believe it gave the trade down there excellent satisfaction."

No. 6.—"I have really shipped no flour to the West India Islands, but only split peas. But I may say that the samples of flour sent me to equal, in case of a deal, have none of them been inferior."

No. 7.—"We always shipped our best flour to the West Indies and British Guiana, and have had no complaints as to quality, as compared with other brands sent there. Our flour has all been shipped in flat-hoop barrels, and we have no complaints as to package, though some would prefer round-hooped barrels, in order to ship other merchandise back. From some letters received from reliable correspondents down there, our Canadian flour is not liked as well as the American; and other customers report just the reverse."

No. 8.—"From my enquiries when in Jamaica I learned that round-hooped barrels are preferred, and that there is quite a prejudice against flat hoops. . . . It is folly to ship anything but the best, and we must be sure it is made from dry wheat. . . . Having shipped a sample lot last spring to Jamaica, I learned the flour had arrived and was being sold slowly, with no complaint of quality."

No. 9.—"Had sent no flour to West Indies, but sent split peas in flat-hooped barrels through New York and Halifax parties."

No. 10.—"Shipped two cars flour upon command from a Halifax firm in flat-hooped barrels, and suppose it is all right, having heard nothing to the contrary."

No. 11.—"Never shipped direct on own account, but sold to a Halifax firm four cars to go to West Indies."

No. 12.—"Is a commission house, whose letter is as under: 'We have had requests from several of our correspondents to put the flour in round-hoop barrels, but have not been able to procure them. As to the quality of the flour: with one exception, when, as an experiment, we shipped a cheaper grade, in order to compete with a low grade from New York, we have never had a complaint regarding the quality. But the low grade lot referred to did not keep very well. . . . We will not repeat the experiment, but in future will only ship the better grades. We have shipped to nearly all the West India islands, and find that in most of them barrels with round hoops are wanted. If our millers would adopt this style of barrel it would help the sale of Canadian flour.'"

No. 13.—"An exporting firm, engaged in the West India trade, writes under date 28th October: 'There is no question but that a better barrel is required, and though the flat hoops sell, the round hoop barrels are much preferred. We have an order for 600 barrels flour from Demerara and 300 barrels from Martinique. The former particularly asks us to ship round-hoop barrels, and Martinique tells us not to ship unless in round-hoop barrels.'"

It will be observed that only two out of ten persons or firms who shipped direct make any reference to complaint of quality, and in one of these the reason is plainly given. We are encouraged to hope, therefore, that the rather startling statement of the *Herald's* informant has been made of more general application than is warranted. If ten Ontario merchants and millers, who have sent probably ten thousand barrels to various islands, agree in saying they have had none but favorable reports from the