

where there have been fears of a drouth. Millers cannot understand the strength in values here, figuring a clear loss of 15c. per barrel in making flour out of wheat at present prices. The flour market is dull, and they are generally of opinion that so long as this continues, there can be no permanent improvement of strength in wheat. Some go so far as to predict an early and heavy decline in wheat prices, as a result of heavy stocks and the dullness in flour. A well known elevator man said to-day that wheat would be 8 or 10c cheaper a or about May 1st, adding that nothing save an outbreak of hostilities in Europe could prevent such a decline.

Receipts and shipments have been very light and the movement in the country is almost at a standstill, owing to heavy general storms and severe cold weather.

The highest and lowest wheat prices by grade on 'change during the week ending Jan. 19, closing prices, and the prices one year ago were:

				Jan. 13	1886
WHEAT—	Highest.	Lowest.	Closing.		
No. 1 hard	80	78 1/2	80	85	
" 1 northern	79	77 1/2	79	82	
" 2	77	75	77	77	

Futures were not strong and showed but slight fluctuations, May 1 hard opening at \$4 1/2c and closing at \$4 1/2c. May 1 northern opened at \$3 3/4c and closed at \$3 1/2c.

Flour.—There has been no improvement in flour during the week, the market seeming inclined to fall back into the old ante-holiday condition of weakness and depression. There is some inquiry from abroad and from domestic markets, but buyers demand heavy concessions and millers decline to do business at a loss, particularly at a time when the output is subject to the restriction of a low and frequently varying stage of water.

Quotations at the mills for car or round lots are: Patents, \$4.40@4.60; straights, \$4.20@4.40; first bakers', \$3.60@3.85; second bakers', \$2.95@3.10; best low grades, \$1.80@2.00, in bags, red dog, \$1.40@1.50, in bags.

These quotations are on flour in barrels, except as stated. The rule is to discount 25c per bbl for 250 and 140 lb jute bags, 20c for 98lb cotton sacks, 15c for 49lb cotton sacks, 10c for 24 1/2 lb cotton sacks. In half barrels the extra charge is 30c per bbl.

MILLS.—The market is firm and steady, owing to the light production. Quotations are for bulk bran, \$9.50 to \$10.25, and for shorts \$10.25 to \$10.75 per ton.—Northwest Miller.

The Visible Supply.

The amount of wheat in store at the principal points of accumulation in Canada and the United States (east of the Rocky Mountains), on the dates named, also the amount afloat and in transit by water, with corresponding week last year, was as follows:

	Bush. 1886.	Bush. 1885.
November 27th	59,572,340	55,539,993
December 4th	59,539,331	56,700,440
December 11th	59,989,660	57,981,156
December 18th	61,460,330	58,388,469
December 24th	62,261,330	58,320,974
	Bush. 1887.	Bush. 1886
January 1st	62,729,570	58,432,999
January 8th	63,345,59	57,780,320
January 15th	62,823,581	57,118,183

By this statement it will be seen that the visible supply of wheat decreased 522,014 bushels for the week ended Jan. 15th, 1887.

WHEAT IN STORE.

The following shows the stocks of wheat (expressed in bushels) in store at the places named on Jan. 15th, 1887: Duluth, 9,876,000; Minneapolis, 7,339,378; Chicago, 13,281,251; Toronto, 22,500; Montreal, 269,251; New York, 9,951,600.

UNITED KINGDOM IMPORTS.

The following return shows the extent of the imports of breadstuffs into the United Kingdom during the first seventeen weeks of the season, with the average price:

	IMPORTS.	1886.	1885.	1884.
Wheat, cwt.	16,357,587	18,956,074	16,202,375	
Flour, ..	5,061,977	4,295,457	4,933,840	

	WHEAT.	1886.	1885.	1884.
Av. price, week.	33s 11d	30s 2d	31s 5d	
Av. price, season.	31s 5d	30s 11d	32s 1d	

BREADSTUFFS AND PROVISIONS EXPORTS, ETC.

The following table shows the exports of breadstuffs and provisions from the principal Atlantic seaboard ports for the week ending Jan. 15th, 1887, and for the corresponding week last year.

	1887.	1886.
Flour, bbls.....	209,800	175,773
Wheat, bus.....	1,980,800	198,709
Corn, bus.....	989,400	1,952,158
Oats, bus.....	9,000	140,279
Pork, lbs.....	5,360	4,210
Lard, lbs.....	5,416,700	5,808,778
Bacon, lbs.....	10,379,900	8,275,757

AVAILABLE SUPPLY OF WHEAT.

Available supply of wheat Jan. 15th, 1887, and corresponding date last year; also the supply as shown by the first report for each month of the crop year:—

	1887, bus.	1886, bus.
Visible supply in the		
U. S. and Canada,		
east of the Rocky		
Mountains	62,823,581	57,118,183
On passage—		
Wheat and flour for		
Continent	5,420,000	1,600,000
Wheat and flour for		
United Kingdom..	21,040,000	14,400,000
Total	89,783,581	73,118,183
1887—		
Jan. 8	88,225,595	72,180,320
Jan. 1	86,169,570	71,454,978
1886.		
Dec. 4	80,739,331	71,823,440
Nov. 6.	81,079,352	66,283,886
Oct. 2	73,700,379	56,740,901
Sept. 4	67,525,555	56,444,381
Aug. 7	58,192,992	56,419,409
July 3	52,778,752	63,440,303

Flax-Growing in the Northwest.

But it is of the flax, growing and manufacturing of the Canadian Northwest that I now wish more particularly to speak. Here three species of indigenous flax—the *linum perenne*, with a blue flower; the *linum striatum* and the *linum rigidum*, bearing yellow flowers—grow luxuriantly over a vast area of country, and may, no doubt, one day, be utilized to good advantage in the manufacture of twines, etc., when machinery is introduced to work up the fibre. The true flax plant has been grown here for the last 200 years. It was introduced by the French Canadian pioneers in the reign of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the last 150 years self-sacri-

ficing French Canadian nuns have prepared the flax and spun it, by the old methods, into vestments and linen altar cloths, as well as into garments for ordinary wear, and these industrious nuns taught the art to the half-breeds of the Northwest.

It is, however, only within the last few years that a true conception is beginning to be formed of the special suitability of the Canadian Northwest for flax-growing, of the vast area that can be brought under cultivation, and of the excellence of the fibre for the purpose of the manufacturer. A comparison of the soils of Egypt, of Belgium and Holland (where the finest fibre in the world is grown), and of Russia (where the largest quantity is produced), with that of our own Northwest, will show that the conditions for obtaining both quantity and quality are here present in almost every part of the country.

Mr. Peter O'Leary, a gentleman well acquainted with the conditions under which the fibre is grown and manufactured in Ireland, after travelling over this region, wrote to the *Field* last year, and made a report to the Dominion Government, pointing out the entire fitness of this land for flax cultivation. After speaking of the excellence of the soil and the numerous lakes and streams fit for steeping flax straw, he points out the wide extent of country over which wild flax grows, and considers its spontaneous growth a strong evidence of natural suitability for ordinary flax. "The Mennonites," he adds in his report to the Government, "grow considerable flax for the sake of the seed, which they sell at 90c to \$1 a bushel to manufacturers of oil and linseed cake, the use of which is largely increasing. There is now a mill in Winnipeg, but hitherto Minneapolis was the market." He thinks there is an unlimited field for flax spinning here, and that manufacturers from Ireland or Scotland should readily supply the necessary capital. "All circumstances," he concludes, "are in favor of the utilization of flax fibre for cordage and textiles of various kinds."

Apart from the amazing fertility of the soil two peculiarities of the Northwest favor this crop. One is, plenty of water for the purposes of retting, and many of the lakes and ponds are of an alkaline character, which will be a great natural aid in procuring a bright thread. It is this quality, I believe, which gives such a value to the Belgian flax grown above the River Lys. Another is that where dew retting is practised, (and there are many who maintain that for producing the best thread, neither steam nor water retting can ever equal it) the regular and copious dew falls of the great prairie, combined with the clear atmosphere, give all that nature requires for this part of the process.

Another point of advantage for the Canadian Northwest farmer is that by sowing flax on the "breaking" or first turning of the soil, a more profitable crop can be produced in flax than in wheat or any grain. This has been proved by the experience they have already gained. Now there are 250,000,000 acres of virgin soil that can be thus treated within the "great wheat belt" alone; and if one crop—and no more—were taken off each new field as it is brought first under cultivation it would supply the factories of Ireland, England and Scotland with