

of the imported meal to the amount of one half the cost of freight on the raw material. The freight from Chicago to Winnipeg for instance, would give about \$3.40 per ton in favor of importing the meal as against the raw material aside from the tariff discrimination. The relative value of the raw material to the manufactured product was evidently taken into account in framing the United States tariff, for there we find that the duty on oatmeal is \$20 per ton, while it is \$9 per ton on oats. This is a fair distribution of tariff according to the relative value of the raw material to the manufactured product.

At present the outlook is very blue for the home milling industry. The market in Manitoba and the Territories is being supplied with imported meal, at prices with which the local mills cannot compete on the present basis of prices of the raw material here. There are six oatmeal mills in Manitoba and the Territories which are now placed in this unenviable position, besides the oatmeal milling industry in British Columbia, which is suffering in the same way. The oatmeal milling industry has been practically killed here for the present, and is liable to suffer the same way in future years, while this discriminating duty remains. A higher tax on raw material than on the manufactured product is certainly a condition which should not be tolerated.

THE CUBAN SITUATION

If our southern neighbors are not forced into war with Spain, it will not be the fault of the more outspoken element in the population of the country. The other day the newspapers contained big headlines announcing that the "Methodists Were for War." The report was to the effect that the New York district conference had adopted a report, by a vote of 163 to 3 demanding the expulsion of the Spaniards from Cuba. We were informed that the conference had framed an indictment of ten points, as reasons why this action should be taken. Some of these so-called points were about as unreasonable and as exaggerated as could well be imagined; but when clericals undertake to discuss matters outside of religion, they can be just about as unreasonable, if not a little more so, than the average educated mortal. When the teachers of the religion of peace and good will vie with the music hall and dance house mob in endeavoring to drive the nation into war, the situation does seem deplorable, and almost without hope.

It is a pity indeed, that religious bodies, social bodies and other influences in the United States are pushing the executive so hard in this matter. War, from whatever aspect it

may be viewed, is deplorable, horrible. If these 163 teachers and leaders of religion, composing almost the unanimous voice of the New York conference, could be formed into a military body and be placed in front of the battle in case of war, they would get about their just deserts.

It is to be hoped, however, that this crisis will be tided over without war. If the hot-heads do not force the matter too fast there is still a possibility of a satisfactory solution of the difficulty. Every day gained is a triumph for peace, and a peaceful settlement will be a thousand times more glorious than all that could be achieved by war.

One deplorable feature of a war between our neighbors and Spain would be the cultivation of the war spirit, which once aroused is not easily suppressed, and the danger of a spreading of its venomous contagion. There is still a great deal of the savage left in even the most refined and civilized men, and the war spirit stirs up the slumbering elements of savagery. If this great calamity does overtake our neighbors, they will have the sympathy of the Canadian people, and indeed of Britishers the world over. We trust they will be spared. The Commercial is for peace.

COARSE FEED SCARCE.

The scarcity of coarse feed for live stock in some districts of Manitoba this spring, again calls attention to the enormous waste through the burning of straw after thrashing every fall. The hay crop was short last year, and in some sections the local supply of hay has not been sufficient to go around. Farmers who are obliged to buy hay find that the prices are double and even triple the usual value in ordinary years. The scarcity of feed may mean that cattle will be turned out in poorer condition this spring than usual, and this may affect the export trade in fat cattle as well as the dairy industry. Cattle that come out in poor condition in the spring, take a long time to recover. A favorable season, however, may make up for poor condition to a considerable extent.

Statistical Position of Wheat

For some time during the winter just closing the prices of wheat at Chicago, and, indeed, at most other American markets, were relatively higher than abroad, and the result was a perceptible check to our export trade in that cereal. The visible supply of wheat in the United States and Canada, east of the Rocky mountains, as reported by Bradstreet's on January 1, this year, was 54,173,000 bushels; adding the stocks of the Pacific coast of 6,661,000 bushels, a grand total was secured of 60,834,000 bushels available at the opening of the

year, against 77,459,000 bushels the year before, a discrepancy of 16,625,000 bushels. Trade recognition of this apparently serious deficiency in available supplies sought expression in predictions of very high prices for wheat during the balance of the cereal year. The high prices reached in Chicago were merely regarded as a small sample of what would be realized later on, when the producers or holders of the cereal awoke to the advantages they possessed over consumers at home and abroad. Sanguine expectations have, however, not been realized, and there appears to have been enough wheat to go around without any abnormally large advance.

The total stock held in the United States and Canada, east and west of the Rockies, on April 1, this year, was 44,367,000 bushels, against 57,676,000 bushels on April 1 a year ago. It will thus be seen that stock available in this country and Canada decreased during the past three months to the extent of 16,467,000 bushels. A year ago, however, they fell off to the extent of 19,783,000 bushels. The export movement of that period amounted to 51,301,000 bushels, or 20,000,000 bushels more than in the same period a year ago. Details of stock of wheat available in this country and Canada on April 1, compare with those on like dates in preceding years as follows:

	Totals.
April 1, 1898	44,367,000
April 1, 1897	57,676,000
April 1, 1896	92,978,000
April 1, 1895	101,742,000
April 1, 1894	98,367,000
April 1, 1893	113,179,000
April 1, 1892	61,334,000
April 1, 1891	47,636,000
April 1, 1890	45,219,000

The total stock in Europe and aloft therefore on April 1, 1898, was 69,900,000 bushels, against 64,700,000 bushels a year ago, an excess of 5,200,000 bushels. The total quantity of wheat available in the United States and Canada, plus the quantity aloft for Europe from all exporting countries, on April 1, added to available stock in Europe, as reported to Bradstreet's, is as follows:

	Grand totals.
April 1, 1898	114,267,000
April 1, 1897	122,376,000
April 1, 1896	161,978,000
April 1, 1895	181,442,000

The total stock in Europe and aloft therefore on January 1 this year was 71,600,000 bushels, so it will be seen that the European stock has decreased only 1,700,000 bushels in three months. One year ago, between January 1 and April 1, the European stock fell off 14,500,000 bushels.

Dairy Trade Items.

It is said the Hudson's Bay Co. contemplate establishing a creamery in one of their buildings at Lower Fort Garry, Man.

The Brandon creamery operated last summer by the Whitelaw Trading Co., has been leased for this season to the R. A. Lister Co. Ltd., Mr. Whitelaw will act as agent for the creamery in the west and British Columbia. Dairy butter and farm produce will also be handled.

The Manitoba government dairy school has closed after a very successful session of three months. In the farm dairy course, there were fifteen pupils in attendance. The first of the professional course began on the 1st of Feb. and ended on the 24th. There were twenty-two students in attendance during this course.