

### Preservation of Grain.

A correspondent of the North-western Miller, writing on the above subject, gives the following instructions necessary for grain preservation:

"A great deal of attention is given to the construction of granaries for wheat in France, because the preservation of this grain depends in a great measure on the manner in which it is stored.

The French millers are averse to placing grain in store on the ground floor, but prefer large store rooms, well aired, on the second or third floors. The walls should be very thick, and constructed of freestone, and attention should be given to the fact that the walls should not be coated with plaster which will be likely to attract dampness from the atmosphere, peel off and soon become loosened, leaving in its place a very copious white foam or moss, which has been recognized as nitrate of lime. These walls, to be protected from dampness ought to be coated internally with a cement made of two parts of good mortar, two of well baked bricks in powder, and one of white marble pulverized. If the quality of the plaster is good, once laid on, and allowed to dry, stucco can then be applied, the properties of which must be such that the plaster will resist the combined action of dampness and the rigors of a northern climate.

Wheat granaries should be very spacious, and carefully paved with varnished bricks, or if not, with good bricks, well baked and thick, but good; well seasoned boards will be found good flooring. The boards must be well seasoned, so as not to impart an odor to the grain. Each floor ought to be allowed several openings about three inches in diameter to allow the wheat to pass from one story to another."

Some of our North-western farmers during the past winter approached near enough to these institutions to have a rough board shanty in which to store their wheat, in the construction of which ventilation was a point well attended to, as the seams between each two boards were sufficiently wide to allow of a good current of air, and plenty of drifting snow in case of a blizzard. Not one of them ever thought of spoiling grain by plastering the inside of the walls either. Some were more careless, and allowed their wheat to lie out side on a platform of boards, with some straw sprinkled over as a protection from the elements. It may be that an inordinate desire for ventilation prompted the adoption of this latter method. Be that as it may, the conundrum still remains to be unravelled, namely. If wheat preserved in the North-western style made first-class flour, what quality would be produced by adopting the French system? By approaching a little nearer to the latter next season, our farmers might carry out a very profitable experiment, and it is a certainty that millers will not object to their making a fair trial.

### Dealing in Futures.

The Chicago Commercial Bulletin of April 17 contains the following report of a case of interest bearing upon deals in the future:

"WASHINGTON, April 16.

"A decision was rendered in the United States Supreme Court in the brokerage case of John H. Rountree, plaintiff in error, against Ernest F. Smith and M. C. Lightner. In error to the Circuit Court of the United States for the Western District of Wisconsin. This was a suit growing out of speculations in domestic produce of the city of Chicago upon 'margins.' It was brought by the firm of Smith & Lightner, brokers, against their customer, John H. Rountree, to recover a balance alleged to be due them on account of purchases and sales of pork, lard, wheat, etc., made by his order. Rountree set up defense that the brokers had not actually bought or sold for him the commodities specified, but had merely speculated in 'options' on his account; that these 'options' were nothing but gambling contracts or bets on the future prices of various articles of produce to which they related; that they were not designed to be actually performed by delivery, but the differences were to be adjusted and payments made and accepted according to the differences between the contract prices and the market price at the date fixed for delivery; and that final these contracts were illegal and void. Plaintiff offered no proof that the particular contracts in controversy were really bets on future prices, but he did offer to show that a very large proportion of all contracts made by members of the Chicago Board of Trade for the sale of produce were settled by payment of differences; that nothing else was expected, and that the proportion of such betting contracts, in which delivery of merchandise was neither expected nor desired, was so great in comparison to bona fide contracts as to justify his inference that the contracts made for him by his brokers were of a gambling kind.

"This Court holds that the evidence of what other people intended by other contracts of similar character, however numerous, is not sufficient of itself to prove that the parties to these contracts intended to violate law, or to justify a jury in making such presumption. It is also to be observed, the court says, that the plaintiffs in this case are not suing on the contracts, but for services performed and money advanced for defendant at his request, and though it is possible that they might under some circumstances be so connected with the immorality of the contract as to be affected by it, they are certainly not in the same position as the party suing for the enforcement of the original agreement.

"The judgment of the Circuit Court in favor of the brokers is affirmed with interest. Opinion by Justice Miller."

According to this decision the flood gates of gambling are once more opened upon the produce business of Chicago. Like the recovering upon a promissory note obtained without consideration, the transfer of a claim to a third and presumably innocent party puts an effectual block upon the former decisions of the Supreme Court of Illinois, declaring dealing in futures upon the marginal principle gambling. To put the matter in plainer terms, each transaction may be gambling, but the broker, who

acts as stakeholder, must in all cases be absolved. It is doubtful if this principle will work well outside of futures. If two men bet \$1,000 on a horse race, and placed their money in the hands of a third person, they might, according to this decision, be guilty of gambling, but the stakeholder could not be made a party to the transaction. This may be law, but it does not sound like logic, and still less that staple commodity, common sense.

### Bolstered Newspapers.

It is astonishing how many of these sheets are published on the continent of America, where the freedom of the press, as alleged by many newspapers, has been run into license. In Europe the unofficial organ is often the mouth-piece of some monarch or head of a ministry, and is used as a medium to in some cases foreshadow the policy of its inspirer, but much oftener to mystify the public as to the probable actions of that individual in the future. On the American continent the newspaper is not so often the mouth-piece of the political leader as of the scheming speculator, although in many cases the politician has some little hold upon a newspaper which assists in blowing his horn. The great journals of the continent, however, have in most cases passed out of the hands of the politicians into those of the monopolist. Even the dispatches which are each day dished up for the daily press by the Associated Press, have to be manipulated by the agents of such men as Jay Gould before they are allowed to be published. The latest alleged transfer of this nature is no less than the Toronto Globe, which, according to some of its cotemporaries, is now controlled, body and boots, by the Grand Trunk. This journal has for many years been conducted for purely political party purposes, and has been looked upon as the oracle of the Reform party of the Dominion, a sort of "urn and thummum" for the guidance of all believers in that political faith. From such a standing to the position of defender of railway monopoly, preferential freight rates and all the little crookedness necessary for a railway advocate, the political enthusiast will consider a terrible fall, but the man who looks at matters from a purely commercial standpoint may think totally different on the matter. As a political oracle the Globe has never been a gold mine to its proprietors, for somehow political and financial intetests seldom lead to mutual success in a newspaper. As a railway advocate it will be more intimately connected with institutions run upon plain principles of financial gain, and by the association may in future prove a much more profitable institution to its proprietors than it has in the past.

An agent of the Portage Westbourne & North-western Railway is at present in London, England, we understand, where efforts will be made to float the finances for the extension of that line. Like all other North-western undertakings, the worst opposition it will meet will be the belittling reports of this country which have appeared in the Eastern Canadian press. But the P. W. & N. W. is now in the hands of parties who will push its extension with vigor.