

not average more than nine or ten bushels an acre. Any crop below twelve bushels must at present prices be unprofitable. The Secretary of State for Michigan, deduces from the replies he received the following statement of the cost of producing a bushel of wheat delivered at the railway, in cents and fractions of a cent.

	Per acre.	Per bush.
Plowing .....	\$1 68	9.63
Seed .....	1 60	9.03
All cultivation from plowing till seed is sown.....	1 70	9.59
Reaping and binding.....	1 50	8.47
Stacking or carrying to barn	80	4.50
Threshing .....	1 24	7.00
Hauling from barn to railroad	53	3.00
	\$9 05	51.22

There remain to be added annual repairs to buildings and fences. Some allowance has to be made for the cost of fertilizers, and when farm manure is used the cost of hauling has to be counted. These items swell the total to 59 cents as the cost of the bushel of wheat. But this is not all: rent has to be estimated, as well as transportation charges, before we arrive at Detroit, where we get in the market price a sure quotation. The "Farm statistics of Michigan" and the United States census figures show great discrepancies; a fact which shows considerable uncertainty in some of the elements of the calculation. Including land, fences and buildings, the census makes the value per acre of the land in these Michigan counties, \$62; the majority of the correspondents of the Secretary of State make the figure \$60, and accordingly \$60 is the figure which he takes for the purpose of the calculation. At four per cent., the yearly rent of an acre of land worth \$60 is \$2.40; and this is certainly one per cent. less than Michigan farmers can borrow for on mortgage. The importance of the item of interest to the farmers is brought into bold relief. If a farm worth \$60 an acre were mortgaged at 8 per cent. to 50 per cent. of its value, this part of the rent would alone be \$2.40 an acre. Besides when the land is fallow, there is no return and the crop in after years must bear a higher rent. For this addition thirty cents an acre is put down, making rent \$2.70. The increase of the value of the land some think, should be put against the rent; but to the farmer the increase in the nominal value of the land, the land being considered an instrument of production, is of no value: if the land went up to \$80 an acre, it would not on that account produce an ear of wheat the more. It is only when he sells, and he sells as owner not as farmer, that the farmer receives any benefit from the increase in the price of his land. Frequently nominal increase in value involves an increase in taxes; and while the land is going up in nominal value its real value as an instrument of production is declining.

We arrive then at the total cost of producing a bushel of wheat delivered at Detroit:

	Per acre.	Per bushel.
All labor as above.....	\$9 05	\$0 51 22-100
Annual repairs, manur- ing, etc. ....	0 59	0 03 33-100
Rent .....	2 70	0 15 23-100
Transporta'n and ch'gs	1 77	0 10
Total .....	\$14 11	\$0 79 78-100

The cost being nearly eighty cents (79-78) a bushel, what is the selling price? Mr. McIver finds that the average price for spot wheat, that is in this case, at Detroit, No. 1 white, to have been for the eight years from 1876 to 1883 inclusive, \$1.20. But in the present state of depression, this average does not help us; and unless it be a figure, the return of which we may fairly count upon, it is of no value whatever. The profit in the past, over thirty-five cents a bushel, was a good profit; but with No. 1 white wheat at 75 cents, its present price in Detroit, there is a positive loss of nearly five cents a bushel.

This loss is the measure of the extent to which the farmer is going back. Part of the difference may come out of his own wages, when he performs the work of a laborer, part may represent depreciation, part take the form of additional mortgages. In Europe what would happen, under a like state of things? Rent would be the first item in which there would have to be a decrease. Here the farmer is his own landlord; but nevertheless the item of rent must enter into any estimate of this kind. It must modify the capitalization and affect the selling price; and as interest paid on capital borrowed on the farm takes the place of rent, it is clear that if present prices continue, the existing rates of interest cannot be paid out of the proceeds of the wheat crop. In fact land, in the condition of that of these eighteen Michigan counties at present is of no value as an instrument for growing wheat; and wheat grown upon it is not a crop that can pay any rent at all. That there is such land, economists since the days of Ricardo have recognized. Hitherto they have been confined to inferior soils; now, wheat being the crop by which to estimate them, they include the best lands in the state of Michigan. Is the condition of Ontario much different from that of these Michigan counties? If different, in what respect? It is certain that the average wheat production of Ontario is lower. Fortunately, if wheat is an unprofitable crop, there are other crops that which the farmer can grow that yield a fair profit.

—Besides the treaty with Spain, the United States has concluded commercial treaties with San Domingo, Guatemala, Salvador, and Columbia. The copy of the Spanish-American treaty which has been made public was cabled from Madrid to the *New York Times*. The official copy has been sent to the Senate for ratification. The treaty with San Domingo secures for American flour free admission into the sable republic; and the treaties with Central America are said to be liberal in the matter of American flour and grain. The tobacco and sugar interests show a strong opposition to the Spanish-American treaty; the sugar growers of Louisiana and the tobacco growers of Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, and Iowa may be expected to join the malcontents. If all these and other contemplated treaties be ratified, the reduction of revenue will be so great that the United States tariff on manufactures cannot be much, if at all, decreased.

## TORONTO TRADE.

Considering the prevailing tone in Toronto business circles during November, the complaints of dulness and the comparisons made unfavorable to similar seasons in other years, our readers may be surprised to learn that the aggregate imports and exports for last month were larger than those of the same month in either of the two years next preceding. But this is the case. The Board of Trade Returns show that in November 1882, the aggregate was \$1,752,392; in November 1883, \$1,747,761; in November, 1884, \$1,779,991. The value of the principal items of import we select, as under, and compare with the preceding November:

ARTICLE.	Nov. 1884.	Nov. 1883.
Cotton goods.....	\$ 59,038	\$ 63,075
Fancy " .....	20,235	18,611
Hats and bonnets .....	5,001	5,323
Silk goods .....	28,431	27,559
Woollen goods .....	63,955	56,293
Total dry goods.....	\$176,660	\$170,861
Books and pamphlets	\$ 36,859	\$ 50,804
Coal and coke.....	206,166	162,574
Drugs and medicines...	15,875	15,108
Fruits, dried and can'd	43,398	54,012
Glass and glassware...	16,215	24,922
Iron and steel goods...	99,342	122,664
Jewellery and watches	29,602	26,352
Leather goods.....	20,805	23,548
Musical Instruments...	11,020	10,068
Paper goods .....	21,879	30,198
Wheat flour .....	10,902	7,847
Indian corn.....	21,345	3,058

The items of dry goods, coal, flour and maize account for three-fourths of the excess of imports in November this year over last.

Turning to exports, the produce of Canada, we find them to have been \$470,608 in value as compared with \$560,775 in November preceding. They consisted of merchandise under the following headings:

	Nov. '84.	Nov. '83.
The Forest .....	\$ 31,826	\$ 47,143
Animals, &c. ....	81,558	134,401
Fisheries.....	391	.....
Field products .....	330,476	361,894
Manufactures. ....	24,571	16,722
Miscellaneous .....	1,786	615
Total.....	\$470,608	\$560,775

Of the Canadian manufactures exported at this point, books, machinery, cotton and woollens show an increase. The main items among our field products viz: barley, beans, peas, seeds, were all shipped in diminished quantity. Horses, horned cattle, hides and skins are in excess of the same month of 1883. But exports of meats are much smaller; so likewise are wool, eggs, and butter, while cheese and malt are this month *nil* in the returns. Lumber, too, shows diminished shipments.

—It is fashionable in certain quarters just now to have a fling at what is called old-fashioned life insurance. And we are often treated to flippant essays upon the grasping and illiberal and expensive character of "old-line companies," in contrast with the simplicity, cheapness, sweetness and light of the brand new co-operative assessment concern. Those who like experiments, and are fond of frequent change, will very likely give the plausible cheap-John shops a trial; indeed they mostly insist upon buying their own experience, rather than be warned by that of others. But it might be money in their