



The particular purpose of this department is to create an increased market for Canadian mill products—flour, oatmeal, cornmeal, rolled oats, pea barley, house meal, split peas, etc.—at home and abroad. The interests of the miller who grinds the grain will have thoughtful consideration. Any matter that is likely to lead to an improvement of conditions in the local market of any of the various provinces of the Dominion will be carefully considered in this department. A close study will be made of the foreign markets with the aim of further developing the Canadian export trade. The MILLER each month covers very effectively the field of flour handlers and buyers of mill products, not only within the borders of the Canadian Confederation, but in West India, the West Indies, Great Britain and other European centres. This department will be made valuable to them in discussions of the conditions of the market in this country, reliable market data, the manufacture of mill products, methods of transportation and shipping intelligence in its bearings and relationship to the milling industry. We note a correspondence from millers, shippers and buyers on any matter involving these important questions.

MILLERS AND RAILROAD RATES.

THE Dominion Millers' Association, when in convention next month, might find a profitable subject for discussion, and action, in the methods of shipment and the uncertain character of freight rates charged by our railroads on grain and flour shipped over their respective roads. We cannot illustrate our meaning better than to cite a case that came under our notice within the past month. A miller doing business a short distance east of Toronto bought Manitoba wheat shipped from Port Arthur and paid for freight at the rate of nine cents per bushel. He learned that had the same wheat been billed to Montreal for export, earned at least two hundred miles further east, the rate would have been only six cents; on the other hand the miller whose abode should happen to be west of Toronto, perhaps London, would be charged at the rate of eight cents per bushel. Here are three different rates prevailing for carrying the same class of merchandise over the one road with the remarkable contradiction of ordinary business rules, that the greater the labor the less the cost. By what system of business metaphysics this basis is reached is beyond the ken of ordinary mortals. Some years ago, when millers were making a profit of forty and fifty cents on a barrel of flour, they would hardly trouble about a matter of two or three cents freight charges, indulging in nothing worse than an inward laugh at the absurdities of railroad methods, but in this day when the closest economy and prudent management is needed to work out a profit of any kind cents are cents, and even the railroads have to be watched.

The difference of three cents per bushel on wheat is large enough under present circumstances to operate measurably against the export trade in flour to Great Britain. The English miller can buy his wheat in Canada as cheap as the Canadian miller, and with the cost of carriage in his favor he finds in a depressed market that he can make flour of Canadian wheat in his own mill and compete quite successfully with his importer-neighbor, who has flour made in Canada to offer against the home product.

The grain and milling trades have a large interest in railroad methods however the question is viewed. Look at the matter as it appears in another light. The railroads have all along drawn a fine distinction between wheat shipped in its natural state and wheat shipped as flour. When a calculation is made for statistical purposes of the exportations of wheat we talk of wheat and wheat and flour together as one. But when it is a case of living rates on the two commodities an absurd difference is made. The ratio of twelve to nineteen as against flour is the rate in one case that comes before us at this moment. What is the philosophy of the distinction? We doubt if the answer can be made any more comprehensible to the lay mind, not conversant with the intricacies of railroading, than the recent magnanimous regulation of the Grand Trunk agreeing to carry wheat through to Montreal at the same rate as they are carrying it to Boston. Distance in certain cases would appear to be no object with railroad corporations, though at other times it is everything.

The suggestion has been made on other occasions

that a Railway Commission, appointed by the Dominion Government, to whom matters of dispute and doubt could be referred, would remedy not a few of the absurd regulations which exist in railroading in Canada, and which calls for so much effort on the part of millers and the business community generally. Our millers when in convention in August might do worse perhaps than move along these lines.

ONE YEAR'S WORK.

The Millers' Tracing Bureau of the United States has accomplished during the first year of its existence everything, and even more, we opine, that its most optimistic promoters expected. Its operations date from July 13, 1891. Up to the 1st of May, 1892, the receipts of the Bureau were \$1,763.76, and the expenses \$1,644.18, showing a cash balance on hand of \$119.58, besides \$352.50 of a guaranteed fund untouchable. During this period flour shipments equivalent in the aggregate to 1,145,753 sacks of 140 pounds had been traced, which is at the rate of nearly a million and a half of sacks a year. In nine days, recently, orders for tracing between seventy-five and eighty thousand sacks were received by the Bureau. The membership is steadily increasing including the addition lately of the big Imperial mill, of Duluth.

Canadian millers are interested in whatever scheme can be shown to have been effectual in remedying in any reasonable degree the unfortunate delays at the seaboard that do so much to hinder a satisfactory export trade in flour, and it is for this reason that we chronicle occasionally the workings of the Tracing Bureau of the American Millers' Association, which is making a record for itself that is not devoid of many elements of practical success.

TRANSPORTATION TOPICS.

A knotty customs question has arisen in the case of the Canadian steamer Clinton which arrived in Chicago a few weeks ago. The Chicago Journal explains the situation thus: "The Clinton left Duluth about two weeks ago with 18,000 bushels of wheat for Europe via Kingston and Montreal. In coming down St. Mary's river the steamer struck a rock at Topsis Island and was beached to save her from sinking in deep water. The underwriters at Sault Ste. Marie now became the owners of the wet grain, and sold it to Armour & Co., of this city. But that lot of wet wheat is now very much like grain without a country. It could not be sold to Canadian distillers without paying the Canadian duty, and it now seems as if it can not be bought in the United States without paying a duty here. The only way it could have escaped the barbed wire fence of customs duties would be to have continued on its way to Europe, but by that time there would have been 18,000 bushels of fermented grain, which would have killed by its stench everyone on board the ocean steamer. It would not be surprising if the treasury department was called upon to make the ruling on the question, to come up here.

In discussing the important question of tolls on the St. Lawrence route, a matter vital to the grain shipping interests of this country, Mr. Thos. C. Keefer, who is a high authority on a subject like this, says: "The most dignified, as well as politic course for us in meeting foreign complaints of discrimination is to abolish all tolls upon the St. Lawrence route and make this river free not only to the United States but to all nations. This course should have been taken when the Erie canal was freed from toll, or when the Sault canal in Michigan was freed to Canadian vessels, and this course we intend to take with our own Sault canal when completed. The whole amount involved is less than half that which we pay to keep open the International railway, and, judging from all precedent, there is every reason to believe that in a very short time the increase of commerce by the St. Lawrence route, which would be produced by this removal of all restrictions, would more than cover any loss of tolls." The Montreal Gazette is outspoken on this question, contending for "the concession of a rebate of tolls to all grain passing down canals to Montreal, no matter where transhipped."

The Monetary Times, discussing the canal question, points out that the conditions are now favorable for

direct and continuous navigation between Europe and Chicago, by the aid of the Canadian Canals. "The Norwegian steamship, Wergeland, has passed through our canals on her return passage, on her way to Christiana. Captain Weise reports that the financial result of the venture is fairly profitable. Owing to the incompleteness of the enlargement of the St. Lawrence canals, his steamer had to lighten part of her cargo at Kingston. It is expected that in 1894 the enlargement will be finished, and an expense of this kind will no longer have to be incurred. Part of the loss was in the delay which the lightening occasioned. The possibility of direct trade in future will depend upon the cost relative to that of other modes of conveyance. The enlargement of our canals alters the conditions of the problem. Already there is a call for still further enlargement, beyond the capacity to which our canals are now being carried. Before going any further in the direction it will be desirable to see our way clear, and whether there would be any profit in the enterprise for the country, which would have to pay the cost. No rival to the St. Lawrence route is possible; what nature has here done on a grand scale it is not in the power of art to imitate."

MARKET CONDITIONS.

One cannot say that the demand for flour is to any large extent on the increase, and yet the situation is an improvement over that of a month ago. Greater confidence in the future is manifest among leading men in the trade even though prices remain practically unchanged. Enquiries from Newfoundland are coming in, mainly for the lower grades, and a few shipments have been made. There is reason to expect a lively business with the ancient colony later in the year. W. W. Ogilvie, of Montreal, has made considerable shipments to Great Britain and the continent within the month, and other mills have not been altogether without an export trade. Recent reports from Minneapolis are not any too cheering. The weekly output of the mills is much in excess of the demand and mills are being kept running in hope of the situation improving shortly and thus prevent the necessity for shutting down. Prices generally are on the decline, certainly not as firm as the trade would hope for. This is the most discouraging feature of the situation.

PRICES OF FLOUR AND MEALS.

Quotations at leading market centres at time of closing this report are as follows:—

Toronto: Can prices (Toronto freights), Manitoba patents, \$4.95 to \$5; Manitoba strong bakers', \$4.45 to \$4.60; Ontario patents, \$4 to \$4.25; straight roller, \$3.50 to \$3.75; extra, \$3.35 to \$3.40; low grades, per bag, \$1 to \$1.50. The Millers' Bulletin says: "Sales: Straight grade at \$3.85 and \$3.90 per barrel; patents at \$3.85, \$3.90, \$3.95, \$4 and \$4.10 per barrel, c.o.b. for lower provinces; latter for choice brands. Bran, \$10.50 and \$11 per ton, c.o.b. Good demand for bran for shipment to the United States during July, August and September." Oatmeal is, if anything, lower. Sales in car lots have been made at \$3.40, and for smaller lots \$3.50 to \$3.55 has been paid.

Montreal Flour Prices as follows: Patent spring, \$4.85 to \$4.95; patent winter, \$4.80 to \$4.90; straight roller, \$4.20 to \$4.35; extra, \$3.80 to \$3.95; superfine, \$3.25 to \$3.50; fine, \$3.10 to \$3.35; strong bakers', \$4.45 to \$4.65. Oatmeal quiet, prices steady. We quote: Granulated, bbls., \$3.90 to \$4; rolled, bbls., \$3.80 to \$3.90; standard, bbls., \$3.75 to \$3.85; granulated, in bags, \$1.90 to \$2; rolled, in bags, \$1.90 to \$2; standard, in bags, \$1.75 to \$1.80. In bran and shorts a quiet local trade is reported. Quotations as follows: Bran, \$14 to \$14.50; shorts, \$15 to \$17; moultie, \$20 to \$23.

Winnipeg, Man. Flour Prices to local trade in small lots per 100 pounds: Patents \$2.30; strong bakers', \$2.10; XXXX, \$1.10 to \$1.20. Bran, \$9 to \$10 per ton, and shorts, \$11 to \$12. Oatmeal: Granulated and rolled, \$2 to \$2.05. Cornmeal, \$1.60 to \$1.75 per 100 pounds. Split peas, \$2.60 to \$2.65 per 100 pounds. Pot barley, \$2.60 to \$2.65 per 100 pounds. Pearl barley, \$4.20.

Jon. W. Kilgour, Mount Forest, Ont.: "I cannot get along without the MILLER."