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The Yournal of Commerce

FINANCE AND INSURANCE REVIEW.

MONTREAL, AUGUST 3, 1883

COTTON MANUFACTURES.

The cry set up by certain party organs some few years ago, when the present tariff was under discussion, that its effect would be injurious to the consumer, special stress being laid upon its presumed effect upon the "poor 'l farmer, is well answered by the price to which cotton fabrics have fallen during the last few months. The effect of a high protective tariff is doubtless to increase the price of the protected manufactures for a while, but this can only last while the mills requisite to supply the wants of the country are getting established. Home competition brings down prices, and the tendency to over-production is apt to drive them below a paying basis, and this is the present condition of things in Canada as regards the manufacture of the cheaper class of cottons. Grey cottons, and, in a lesser degree, bleached goods, are, now at least, as much too low in price as they were too high! in previous seasons, although much of the economy of manufacture is doubtless referable to improved methods, to experience and that advantage which accompanies the manufacturing in large quantities.

Over-production and selling at a loss must be expected to work their own cure in a short time; manufacturers are not likely to go on producing articles which do not pay. One of the most successful of our cotton manufacturers, who had much to do with the framing of the tariff as regards cottons, foresay the present condition of things six months ago, and entered at once into the manufacture of