

things which they do not produce themselves, more cheaply than they can procure them from any other quarter whatever.

We trust the news which has recently reached us, to the effect that the Imperial Government are about to establish mail communication between Halifax, N. S. and the West Indies, will be the commencement of a new era in this branch of commerce. The importance of this step cannot be overrated, and was strongly insisted upon by the Provincial Commissioners in their report. We imagine that the Government of the Dominion will be called upon to contribute to this undertaking, but if so, it will be money well laid out. While on this subject, we may as well state that, in our opinion, the Commissioners have somewhat exaggerated the probable value of any trade between the British West Indies and British North America. It would be dangerous to make a mistake on that head, especially in the early stage of our intercourse, as it might do mischief by causing disappointment and discouragement. It is true that we might send our products, to a more or less extent, to the whole of the islands, as well as to Demerara and Honduras; but there are few of them from whom we could take their staple products in return, from the simple facts that we could purchase them at lower rates elsewhere, and that to buy in the cheapest market is a commercial necessity from which there is no escaping. The Americans, for a long time, largely supplied the British West India possessions with provisions, flour and lumber, but took none of their customers' products in payment, selling for cash, for which they bought return cargoes at Cuba and Porto Rico. Ever since the slaves were emancipated the British islands have been unable to compete with those in which slavery continued to exist—a fact which though to be regretted is undoubtable, and perhaps to be expected, a few circumstances being taken into consideration. In 1831 Jamaica exported 1,500,000 cwt of sugar, in 1857 the exports dwindled down to 500,000 cwt., and its cultivation has been getting worse day by day; in St. Vincent the exports fell off from 221,000 cwt. to 120,000, while, on the other hand, the exports of Cuba, the Brazils, and Porto Rico, had increased four-fold. In Barbadoes and Trinidad, however, the exports have largely increased, but these are the only islands in which such has been the case. We should like to see more attention given to this subject in which the Maritime Provinces are still more interested than we are.

OUR ORES AND MINERALS.

A LECTURE was recently delivered at Ottawa on the mineral resources of the country, which we are unwilling to pass without notice. We have no knowledge of the lecturer, either personally or by reputation, but as he appeared under the auspices, and in the presence of the leading scientific men of the capital, including Mr. Bunnings of the Geological Survey, we must accord him credit for acquaintance with the subject on which he spoke. He professed to have been in many parts of the world and examined their metalliferous ores, but never saw a country that could compare with Canada in that respect, adding that its mineral wealth is sufficient to make it the greatest of England's dependencies. This is strong language, but we doubt if it is too strong. Notwithstanding all the facts brought to light by the labours of Sir William Logan and his assistants, notwithstanding all the facts that have reached us through other channels for many years, the minerals of Canada are a myth to the general public. They are to our merchants a stumbling block and to our capitalists a foolishness. The reason why such a feeling prevails is plain enough. The attempts hitherto made in connection with mining operations have been of a speculative character. Mining shares were manufactured on the principle of the celebrated razor-man, whose instruments were made "not to shave, but sell." Fictitious speculators in mineral property, especially in the Eastern Townships, have aggravated the evil by their tricks and frauds, to the injury of the country and of the few solvent and respectable persons who had turned their attention to the mining capabilities of that section of Lower Canada. But the great difficulty in the way of this source of Canadian industry has been the want of capital. Our Banks are numerous and wealthy, but they generally find sufficient employment for their means in the ordinary trade of the country, and the business of the manufacturers already in existence. Besides, the mining interest is in bad reputation with them, which is not to be wondered at, considering its

past record. It is not dead, however, but sleeping; and the day of its awakening is, we trust, not far off. The De Lery Gold Mining Company of Quebec have lately issued a report of their transactions, which leads us to hope that the work of utilizing our mineral resources has at length really commenced. It is enough for our present purpose to say that this Company consists of a number of stockholders of the highest respectability, in Canada and the United States, with a large realized capital and a board of Directors in the cities of Quebec and New York respectively. They have made considerable progress in working the valuable auriferous lands owned by them with, as they declare, every prospect of success. Their chief reliance is on rock-crushing, and they have erected an extensive mill having that object in view. On this head, the report states—

"On the first day of June, at seven o'clock in the morning, the whistle of the quartz mill sounded, and the stamps commenced work, which has been regularly continued to the present time."

"During that month, it was my constant effort to procure as many practical tests as possible by working mill process, of the character of our quartz rock. Some half-dozen lots, from three to twenty tons each, from different ledges were crushed, and amalgamated by the simplest process, in every case yielding more or less amalgam (which I have deposited in the Quebec office) and in several instances giving evidence of decided value. As this rock, with one exception, was taken from the surface, I regard the results as remarkable and more encouraging than we had any right to expect from a trial of this nature. By this cover process (exercised on raw material—unselected and generally intractable from the presence of sulphur, arsenic and iron in large quantities—the actual result is necessarily made as unfavorable as possible. After crushing such rocks, months of time, and the action of the elements on the mass, are absolutely essential to the mechanical separation of the gold from its base associations. In proof that we did not extract from the rock treated nearly all the precious metals it contained, one sample of the concenrated tailings, sent to Prof. A. A. Hayes, of Boston, yielded gold the rate of \$67.98 per ton. And reason and universal experience teach us that when rock shall be procured from the heart of the heart of the vein, and treated by the means prescribed by science and approved by practice, for the various positions in which it exists, the amount of gold procured by mill process will be largely increased. In proof of this, the later assays of Prof. Hayes, of rock taken out in different depths on the same vein, show greatly increased richness."

It is impossible to exaggerate the consequences of this enterprise to the industrial process of Canada. It is a step in the right direction, whatever fate may attend it. The De Lery Company have proved their good faith by embarking their own money in the concern, and have shown their wisdom by inducing foreign capitalists to aid them from their larger means. We trust the example will be extensively followed. In the Dominion, we have coal, iron, copper, lead andumberless ores and minerals to enrich ourselves and those from abroad who may join us in disinterring them. But English capitalists, in particular, have a dread of Canadian investment, they entertain a lively collection of their adventures of the Grand Trunk Railway, from which they say recarous have been lost and abused. We must endeavour to teach them that all Canadian undertakings are not of the same description.

REVIEW OF THE ST. JOHN FLOUR TRADE

For 8 Months, from 1st Jan. to 1st Sept. 1867

WE think the flour trade of St. John is of sufficient extent and importance to the millers and merchants of the Western Provinces, to render a review of its course to some extent, both interesting and instructive. We have chosen this period of the year for our review, on it, because in so far as regards flour manufactured from last season's crop of wheat, the year may be said to have closed. We have placed the figures in a tabular form in order to show the fluctuations more clearly and it must be observed that the quality of flour to which they refer, both at St. John and Montreal, is that of ordinary superfine.

The year commenced with a large stock, the accumulations beyond the demand of the previous two months. A new crop of flour had disappeared from the market, and the Canadian article was giving every satisfaction.

Month	High price for St. John	Lowest price for St. John	Price for Montreal	Average for Montreal
January	\$9.12	7.58	7.70	7.30

REMARKS.

Heavy stock rendered the market very dull; sales almost exclusively confined to city consumption. Receipts of the month about 18,000 bbls.

February	\$8.80	8.12	8.17	7.28
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The receipts of this month were very scanty, amounting only to about 800 bbls. Towards the end of the month the market recovered its tone, and prices in St.

John and Montreal assumed their relative proportions.

March	\$8.80	8.30	8.85	7.57
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Arrivals small and stock getting reduced. Supplies on the way very much delayed. Receipts of this month 2,000 bbls

April	\$9.30	8.90	9.13	8.25
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Arrivals about equal to the demand, which has much improved. The receipts of the month amounted to about 10,000 bbls. About this time the attention of millers and others in Ontario and Quebec was directed to the subject of sour flour, and it was pointed out that such an article would be not only useless, but would damage the trade.

May	\$10.12	9.25	9.63	9.06
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Prices this month had been gradually creeping up, with an active demand, until a point was reached at which consumption was materially checked, when a decline set in. The receipts of this month were the heaviest of any yet noticed, amounting to over 20,000 bbls.

June	\$9.37	7.76	8.47	7.42
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Towards the latter part of this month came the decline in the Montreal market, and, at the same time, the stock on hand began to show symptoms of souring. Receipts 6,000 bbls.

July	\$7.00	7.00	7.00	7.30
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This month it was discovered that almost the entire stock of flour was sour and hard. At one time not a sound barrel was to be had, and numerous forced sales took place, rendering prices altogether nominal. Receipts 7,600 bbls.

August	\$9.12	8.50	9.00	7.40
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In the early part of this month the market was entirely bare of stock, and the whole course of the trade unhinged. Some fresh arrivals from Ontario were found to be no better than previous importations, and orders were sent to the United States. Owing to the scarcity, prices ruled exceptionally high, and not until the last of the month did sufficient arrive to supply the demand, or the trade assume anything like a settled condition. Receipts 20,500 bbls.

The receipts of the eight months amounted to about 87,000 bbls, of which all but about 10,000 were of Canadian origin.

In looking over the above figures and comparing them with the remarks which accompany them, the first thing that strikes us is the extreme sensitiveness of the market; even a moderate accumulation of stock being followed by a more than corresponding reduction of price, and vice versa. This arises from the fact of their being few purchasers of flour, except for immediate consumption. Indeed, we might say, as a rule, no body buys for any other purpose. This being the case, it follows that consignors should take the greatest possible care to avoid overstocking the market at one time, and leaving it bare at others. No doubt, with the present imperfect means of communication this is difficult, for occasionally a consignment will arrive in five or six days, and at other times will be almost as many weeks, but whatever can be done by noting the average time of transit and carefully watching the market, should on no account be omitted.

The next and, perhaps, the most important feature to notice is the condition of affairs in the month of July, when almost the entire stock of flour in the market became sour and, in many cases, utterly useless. A want of attention to the warnings given on this point has been the cause of the loss of many thousands of dollars, and a far worse thing than the mere pecuniary loss has happened in the loss of reputation which has followed, and which it will take a long time to recover. Really good Ontario flour is now looked upon with suspicion, and purchasers prefer the old favorite brands of American flour, which have again obtained, and are likely for some time to keep a footing in this market.

Perhaps it will be said the grain was injured in harvesting, and therefore good flour could not be made of it,—but we have arrived at a different conclusion from a knowledge of the fact that one or two establishments in which a process of kiln drying the grain, and using extra precaution in cooling were adopted, entirely escaped. Not a barrel was injured, while brands, which had previously justly borne a far higher reputation soured.

It would appear that the transition from the dry, warm climate of Ontario, to the damp, cool one of St. John or Halifax, is just as perilous to the keeping qualities of its flour as would be its removal to the still warmer climate of the West Indies, and that in order to do a satisfactory trade with the Maritime Provinces, the general adoption of a kiln drying process is absolutely indispensable, particularly at certain seasons of the year.