

seen women "grinding at the mill," as mentioned in the Scriptures. Bombay is more Europeanized than Calcutta, and it has a flour mill on a large scale; but even here women may be seen employed in grinding the daily allowance of corn for a family or a group of families.

At first sight one might regard this adherence to old ways as the result of an antiquated prejudice against mechanical innovation. This is not the case or the whole case. We must look a little deeper for the real reason why women sit at the mill as they did three thousand years ago. At the bottom of this amazing piece of conservatism lies that religious feeling, prejudice or what you may please to call it—caste. This enters into every movement of the daily life of the people, and into nothing more completely than in the preparation of food. They will only eat and drink from their own vessels, and these must be scoured after each meal. They will only eat food which has been prepared by one of their own caste, and in some cases pollution ensues if even the shadow of a person of different caste falls upon the food after being prepared. Obviously, such people will not use flour which has been made in a mill where all sorts of persons are employed, and where a good many evil shadows may be expected to cross the produce. It is equally certain that people who entertain such prejudices are not likely to be talked out of them.

The Government of India is wise in its determination not to attempt to wean the people of India from their old faiths, or even their antiquated prejudices. But it is very instructive, and suggestive withal, to observe how caste prejudices give way before convenience. The late Mr. Bapty, who built the first steam flour mill in India, must have trusted partly to this, as well as to the fact that he had a European population and large numbers of natives who have no caste to be his customers. The convenience of being able to purchase a pound of flour instead of grinding it in the shanty which serves the poorer natives as a house must be too strong to be resisted by all but the pedantic and fanatical upholders of caste. At all events, Bapty's flour mill has not only succeeded, but there are now several smaller steam flour mills in Bombay under native management. The railways again illustrate the same point. Men of superior caste ought not to touch those of the lower grades; but there they are in a railway carriage huddled together, as railway passengers are all the world over, and not without strong suspicion, when the Bheestic comes round at the station, of drinking unclean water.

When the tramways were first proposed in Bombay and Calcutta, people who knew India well, declared that the projects could not succeed. The Europeans would not ride with natives, and people of different castes would require separate cars or compartments, it was said. As a matter of fact and experience, I may say that Europeans and natives and men of different caste manage to get on very well, for the cars in both cities are well filled, and the tramways are among the best-paying enterprises of India. The inference I draw is that the people of India are much more open to teaching by example than they are to persuasive precept. Bapty did not argue the point; he built his

mill and supplied good and cheap flour. The railway companies furnished good and rapid communication between distant places, as the tramways did for shorter distances. Between them they have done much to educate the people of India, and the lesson is always going on.

### Breadstuffs Abroad.

On Monday last, in its weekly review of the British grain trade, the *Mark Lane Express* said the weather in the United Kingdom had been brilliant, warm and May-like. Buyers demanded a concession." Foreign wheats, however, were unchanged and receipts small. The receipts of wheat and flour (reckoned as wheat) at London during the first half of the current cereal year (ending February 20) show an increase of 152,603 quarters as compared with 1882-4. "It would seem, therefore, that the enormous stocks at waterside—the foundation of which was laid during the first half of 1882-3—cannot have been reduced to the extent many anticipate, notwithstanding the undoubted fact that such diminution is really going on." The *London Miller* is of the opinion that the United States will play the part of a bull, not of a bear, in wheat this season. It says: "The large stocks of inferior red wheat now in sight could only be forced on the European markets at prices which would be lower than America has yet accepted even in the most abundant years. If America were a needy holder, we might expect to see precedents abandoned, and the grain sent freely at 35s. per quarter. But America is not a needy holder. The owners of the 40,000,000 of wheat now classed as 'visible supply' probably include as formidable an array of capitalists as can be found in the world, and, given a greater profit by holding, money will undoubtedly be forthcoming to take over the grain held by the smaller men unable to stand firm for a lengthened period." "The dangers of the situation," it is added (as regards America), are, first: that the promise of a heavy new wheat yield may force the hands of the "stoutest holders"—a possibility which must remain an uncertainty until May or June: the second is that this poor quality red wheat "which is hardly worth being graded No. 3," may be thrown on the British market in the form of flour. On this point the journal last named says: If the Americans flood the country with inferior flour at cheap rates they will be preparing the way for serious reaction. The small millers and bakers whose custom they have sought, quickly take up a prejudice, and if once American flour falls under dislike and distrust, such as recently fell on American bacon, the impression will be one that years will be required to remove. The market of a foreign country requires enterprise to capture—and that the Americans have. It requires yet more care to manipulate—and that the Americans have got to display."

The first week in March in Central Europe there was some depression in the breadstuffs markets, and Hungarian millers bought less wheat. In Russia prices were steadily supported, and stocks at the southern ports showed a sensible reduction by reason of the small receipts from the interior. Advices in London

from Australia to January 19 reported favorable harvest weather, and the bulk of the wheat crop secured. The quality was said to be very fine. The wheat and bean crops in Egypt have been reported very promising.

The aggregate of grain on passage from all sources to the United Kingdom and for the continent was given by cable to-day as equal to 18,200,000 bushels wheat, and 1,520,000 bushels corn, against a week ago, respectively, 18,000,000 bushels and 1,840,000 bushels.

### Montreal Stock Review.

The Montreal stock market has evinced very little change in any sense since last review. The sales for the week have been about the same as the previous one, and prices have been generally steady. The chief factor in keeping the market from complete stagnation being the plethora of capital and its moderate rate. Bank of Montreal has not made much progress since this day week, but the feeling is still strong that it will gradually creep up to 200. The opinion is the bank will show a larger profit and better statement at the end of the financial year than for a considerable time past. Shrewd financiers are speculating on the reserve being made up to the maximum of 50 per cent., with a surplus to be added to the Contingent Fund. Others are looking for a bonus of 2 per cent., such as the president declared on former occasions. There is no doubt felt that on the whole this great monetary institution has had a successful year, and has been singularly free from losses, and has had its capital fairly employed. Considering the exceptional stagnation in commerce during the past twelve months, there is very little room for remarks upon the fluctuations of shares of other leading banks, the operations in all, except Merchants', which was active have been on a minimum scale. Any changes that occurred were fractional, and at the close to-day it would be difficult to distinguish any alteration in quotations from the previous Saturday. Miscellaneous securities have been steady, with the exception of City Gas and Canadian Pacific, both of which declined about 2 per cent. on the week. There does not seem to be as much anxiety manifested as formerly as to how commercial notes will be met on the 4th of April, when so many mature in the banks. This is certainly a favorable sign of the soundness of traders in the country. Failures have also been few and far between in commerce of late, which is also significant of there being a better basis to business than formerly.—*Mail*.

### Progress in Season.

The Manchester *Guardian* says: "For about sixteen years—that is to say, from the restoration of the Mikado to his ancient power in 1868 and the firm establishment of a centralized government—Japan has steadily followed the path of reform and progress pointed out by the West. The feudal system has wholly disappeared. They have gradually assimilated the laws, methods of administration and political ideals which govern in Europe. They have created not only an army and a navy—these, indeed, they do not by any means regard as the chief of