

to the American wheat producer. These reports are to the effect that the inhabitants of India, who live on a pint of rice a day to each man, are to engage largely in wheat production, that they will export the entire crop raised, and that systems of railroads gridironing the Indian peninsulars will transport this wheat to the Indian seaports, whence it can be shipped to Europe and sold in Liverpool for less than American wheat is worth in Dakota. The proposition is so startling that it has attracted universal attention, and for some weeks it has had a tangible effect on the grain market of the West, if not of the world.

There is no reason to suppose that these reports contain more than a grain of truth, and there are many reasons for supposing that they possess no truth whatever. It is inconceivable that a land which is swept and devastated by periodical famines should become the granary of the world. But a few years ago uncounted millions of the people of India died of starvation, and the relief which was sent to the survivors almost exhausted the charities of civilized mankind for an entire year. The farmers of Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota and Dakota, and of the far Saskatchewan Valley, may smile in derision at the efforts of the half-naked and ill-fed natives of India, in the best of times to become serious rivals in producing the staple crop which requires intelligence, industry and capital for its successful cultivation. That a low caste and yellow native of India can compete with a Western farmer in the production of wheat is impossible.

A few million bushels of wheat have been produced within a year or two in India; the amount is much greater than ever before raised on that part of the earth's surface for export. During our late civil war, also, cotton was raised in considerable quantities in India and Egypt, and flattering reports were published assuring the manufacturing world that America, as a cotton-producing country, was already "played out," and that the East would furnish all the cotton which the human race might require. Nobody now talks of the cotton of Egypt or India.

It is possible that speculators and contractors may build railroads from the East India seaports through the jungles to the plateaus, where wheat might be cultivated with some success by an enterprising race of men. But it may be safely said that they will never carry wheat enough to the seaports to pay for their construction. The nomadic hordes who occupy the elevated plains of Upper India will never become wheat growers so long as they have mare's milk to drink and kid's flesh to eat. That the broad and fertile plains of India, already more thickly populated than any other part of the world, except Belgium and China, should produce wheat for exportation to Europe is not in the nature of things.

There has been hardly enough, or no more than enough, food raised in India for the last 3,000 years to feed the people, to say nothing of raising enough to feed Europe. The productive capacity of the country has reached its limit and cannot be increased.

There is no instance in history where the coolie race have become producers of anything for the general use of mankind, except tea and some

few articles of luxury. They are lazy and improvident, and do not accumulate property, and do not possess in their minds any of the incentives which make the European races great growers and shippers of the articles of commerce and industry. Cotton raised by negro labor is not an exception to this statement of fact, for while it is cultivated by the manual labor of negroes, the thrift, energy and sagacity of white men control the labor by which it is produced. It is possible that, in some distant future, great wheat plantations, owned and managed by European white men, may exist in India, and may help to supply the world's markets. But there is no immediate prospect of anything of the kind. —*Journal, Chicago.*

### General Notes.

It is reported that the Geo. T. Smith Middlings Purifier Co. soon will commence an action against Messrs. W. & J. G. Greey, of Toronto, Canada, for infringement of their patents on centrifugal reels.

SIR JAMES CAIRD, who is regarded as an authority on the production of wheat in India, has recently been called before the Indian Railway Committee of Great Britain, now sitting in London, and testified as follows: "I am not so sanguine about Indian wheat as many people are; the population of India is growing that in two years it will require all of the wheat now exported, unless there is a much larger production than at present. No doubt but that during the last two years the export of wheat had made great progress, but this was due to the exceptional seasons which had occurred." As to the increase of production from improved agriculture, he said that would depend on the price of wheat, the temptation offered to the Indian grower to cultivate it. There are large tracts in India capable of growing wheat, but he did not think the cultivation would be greatly extended unless the price became remunerative.

### PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE.

J. H. Doherty is having his old stand fitted up in good shape and will start business soon.

The building lately purchased by Thomas Ryan, of Winnipeg, has been removed to his lot north of the Ontario Bank.

A. Morrisou, butcher, Main street, is opening a branch store in the stand formerly occupied by Mr. Craddock on the Avenue.

The Marquette mills closed for the season yesterday. Mr. Pratt says that it will pay him better to sell his grain, than grind it at the present prices.

Considerable grain is being marketed at present. Farmers are taking advantage of the good roads and the satisfactory prices, which are 90c for No. 1 hard wheat, and 20 to 22c for oats.

The M. & N. W. Co. are having their lands valued by Mr. Thomas McNutt, who is engaged in the work in the vicinity of Minnedosa. The Company owns a large amount of first-class land.

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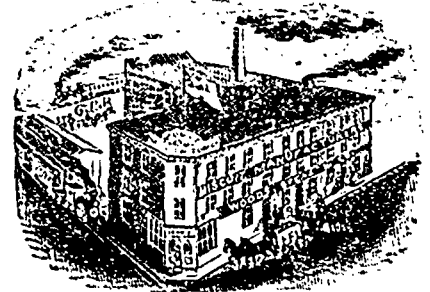
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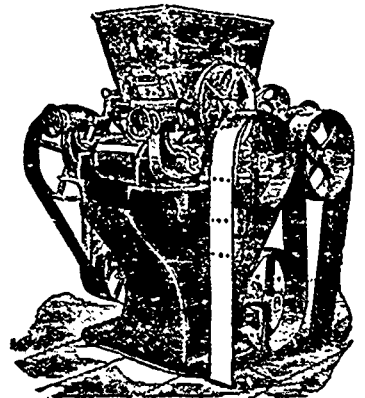
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