

which possesses many persons in the country to see and take part in city life, are apparently too strong to be resisted. If all the reasons for resistance were known, they would more often prove effective; and proclamation of them ought to be made on all suitable occasions.

It is undoubtedly true, however, that there is an increasing number of persons in the States, who refuse to incur the responsibility of paternity and maternity. Poverty is far from being the universal motive that actuates those persons. Among them may be found wealthy and frivolous persons, who think it the greatest good of life to give themselves up to some kind of personal enjoyment which they believe to be as free from care as possible. Often, generally it may be, the choice, from this low point of view, is a mistake; and its effects can scarcely fail to be publicly injurious.

HUDSON'S BAY STOCK.

The *Canadian Gazette*, published in London, England, makes an estimate of the value of the assets of the Hudson's Bay Company. The capital is £1,400,000 in shares of £14 each; and the average dividend is put at five per cent. Two-thirds of the capital, we are told, is "represented by the actual present value of the stores, stock-in-trade, etc.;" and the opinion is expressed that "if such assets were at once realized, they would yield very much more." We believe, however, that they could not be "at once realized," without a very great loss, perhaps fifty per cent. on their value. Of any premises the company may have in London, this would not be true; but it would be true of the stock-in-trade, and not far from true of the stores in the North-west. £750,000 is due the company on land sales; but it would be rash to conclude that all this sum will be collected. By valuing the unsold lands, assumed at 5,250,000 acres, at 30/ stg.,—over \$7 an acre—£8,250,000 is figured out as the prospective proceeds of land sales. Such a figure, given to represent the "present value" of the lands is utterly delusive. If the company can sell the balance of its arable lands, at that figure, within a quarter of a century, it will do well. And then, of five millions and a half acres, a large allowance must be made for waste lands. Town sites will not make up the difference.

Whether there be any thing to justify the recent fall in the company's stock is quite another matter. So long as the stock pays five per cent. dividend, an English stock ought to be worth par, for many Canadian stocks, on which dividends ought to be higher, as interest is higher here than in England, are selling far above their real value. But Hudson's Bay stock is selling at nearly one hundred per cent. premium. It may be well worth this figure and more; but extravagant estimates of the present value of the company's assets ought not to be allowed to influence persons dealing in the stock. We suspect that a diminution in the demand for the stock, in Canada, has been the main cause in depressing the price. The reason why buyers in Canada are less plentiful than a year ago does not arise from a want of confidence in the stock, but is attributable to speculators being over-weighted with other ventures.

OUR COTTON MILLS.

The deliberations of the Cotton Parliament at Montreal last week have excited the interest of a much larger community than the shareholders of the mills, or those immediately concerned as merchants. Some unnecessary alarm has been occasioned by partizan writing on both of the subjects, yet one cannot say that this alarm has been wholly productive of evil. Indeed it has had two definite good results: it has led Canadians to take a survey of the rise of our domestic cotton trade, thus enabling us to see more clearly where we are and what are our tendencies; it has also enabled the manufacturers to perceive more clearly some of the mistakes to which their inexperience has laid them open.

As has already been pointed out, in these columns, the most serious of these mistakes of inexperience on the part of manufacturers was in following exactly in the path of the pioneers of the cotton business who had begun by making grey cottons alone. The error was the less likely to be corrected as, to produce such goods, a less variety of machinery had to be imported and less skill was needed in the working of a factory. So long as making grey cottons paid those already in the field, and the expenses were so much less, the new manufacturers were but little troubled with the ambition to bring out untried lines of goods, requiring greater capital to produce them. Then, again, the manufacturers of cotton-mill machinery, in the United States and England, finding in Canada a new market, proceeded to push for it, and misled a good many capitalists as to the relative quantity of cottons which our population should consume. It was pointed out by them that whereas, in, say the United States, there was one spindle to every five of the population, there was in Canada two or three years ago only about one to every twenty. The Canadian investors did not reflect that grey cottons met only a portion of the needs of the country, and further that the natural consumption per head of our population is, owing to the climate, only about one half that of the American. They found this out recently, however, when stocks of domestics began to accumulate on the shelves of both wholesale and retail houses all over the country; and the general public learned it with some surprise when about May last a break of some 12½ per cent. occurred in manufacturers' prices, followed by another fall of 7½ per cent. in a month's time, with corresponding tumble in retail prices.

Some of the older manufacturers, it is true, anticipated this state of things, and set to work making new kinds of goods, and giving all possible variety to their products. The recent flattening out of grey cottons has caused the newer managers or boards to see the same necessity, and to realize the fact that, after all, we have not yet in Canada an unlimited field in this line of investment for capital.

It is perhaps even fortunate that this limit was passed in grey cottons alone, for had our products been more diversified from the first, the true position might not have been realized until a collapse had taken place, in all branches at once. Such a col-

lapse would have shut the cotton men up to two serious alternatives: that of throwing ten or fifteen thousand people out of employment for quite a length of time, or that of throwing our goods upon a foreign market against the competition of American, English, French and German manufacturers, whose products, already so vast, are increasing at a rate which is awakening apprehension among themselves. The latter alternative would have involved a very great sacrifice. England has recently been exporting cotton goods at less than cost. In the language of the *Manchester Examiner*, English cotton manufacturers have been sending about a shilling's worth of goods for eleven pence. To meet competition like this abroad would have been practically impossible to our cotton manufacturers.

While we hear of the overstocking only in grey, cottons it is worth while to state that a greater variety of goods is now being made than most people are aware of. At the time of the fall in greys there were made in Canada, bleached and fancy shirtings, apron checks, Nun's stripes, denims, ticks, ducks, cottonades, crochet and knitting cottons, drills, grain bags, cheviots, pocketings, wigans and canton flannels. Work on the last named has since been enlarged and the bleached canton flannels just brought out by the Hochelaga Mills have been pronounced equal to any imported, and are thus likely to displace the foreign goods. Other mills have set to work on cambrics, silicias, sateens, corset jeans, brown shirtings and fancy shirtings of a finer class than hitherto produced, gingham and dress styles with a limited range of cassimeres. A further departure is being made, as we have formerly noticed, in the establishment at Magog, Que., of a calico printing factory. The material printed here will not be made on the spot, but will be brought from the other cotton factories, so that this industry will itself help to draw off the present supply of grey goods. It is expected to print 250,000 yards a week and should thus consume the product of a mill of 70,000 spindles, or in other words it will take all the cotton manufactured by the largest mill in Canada. It will thus be seen that the glut in grey cottons will soon be relieved, but to effect this more quickly the cotton convention decided that those factories now running on grey cottons should shut down on Friday and Saturday of each week till the demand comes afresh, while an immediate advance will be made on existing stocks. We have probably seen the first result of this advance in the circular just issued, respecting cotton bags.

The convention formed themselves into a Cotton Manufacturers' Association, of which Hon. D. McInnes is president, Mr. A. H. Gault, vice-president, and Messrs. D. Morrice, W. Payne, John Doull, W. Curry and C. Slater, as an executive committee. Among other things the association adopted a sensible reform in doing away with the "dating ahead" system, in making their invoices. But in deciding to discontinue the rebate on guarantee custom, by which customers received a discount to balance any fall in prices which might occur between the sale and the date of invoice. They excepted the months of July