

### The Flour Blending Industry.

There has been started within the past year a new industry in the flour trade in this city, known as the blending of the different grades and kinds of flour, by which the better qualities in all are combined, and the low grades raised and improved. This is known as the blending process, and it was introduced in this market first, because here are to be found in the greatest variety and abundance all the different grades of flour produced from all the different kinds of wheat from every section in the United States east of the Rocky Mountains. This process was introduced here by Mr. Kirk, formerly a miller of St. Louis. It is not claimed that this is a new process in the sense that the patent or roller process was new; but it is a new process of mixing or blending flours made from different kinds of wheat. This has been only partially and imperfectly done in the the grain hitherto by flour mills of both the old and new process. No two kinds of wheat can be ground together properly and the flours blended perfectly at the same time and by the same process. Millers only blend their flour by mixing their wheat before grinding, and hence the best results have never been attained. Under the old stone process every miller had to change the rig of his mill whenever he changed the character of the wheat he was grinding. So must the roller process mills be rigged differently for different wheats. But neither have adopted the only plan by which the flour of the different wheats can be properly and perfectly blended, and hence the best results obtained.

That can only be done by grinding, separating, bolting and finishing each kind of flour separately first, and by mixing the flours perfectly afterward instead of the wheat. Thus by long experimenting a system has been arrived at by which any kind of flour can be improved by this process, from the highest to the lowest. It is found, for instance, that one-third winter and two-thirds spring wheat patent make a better flour than can be made from either winter or spring wheat alone. But it is thought that even this proportion might be improved upon by making the proportion half and half for family uses; only the bakers, who use a larger proportion of patents now than anything else, prefer the greater part spring because of its greater power of absorbing water in making bread, by which a barrel of spring wheat flour will make about 16 lbs. or loaves more of bread to the barrel than winter patents, which are not so strong as the spring, having more gluten in the wheat and the winter more starch.

For this reason the lower or shipping grades, it is claimed, can be improved even more by blending, as the color is made better by the process as well as the flour itself. In the low grades the color is an important matter, as it is naturally darker than the high grades, and by this they are in part designated by the buyer. Hence anything that will raise the color of the same quality of flour will raise its value also. If some miller has shipped to this market a flour for a certain grade which it does not take upon arrival and inspection, it is bought and blended with enough of a better grade to bring it up to the standard of that grade and make it

go on contract; or, vice versa, if a shipment proves to be above the grade and not quite up to the next highest it can be reduced to the standard, and thus get the advantage of the better quality. There is still another advantage. When a certain grade of flour becomes scarce in the market and is wanted for immediate shipment or home use, we can buy a grade or two above and as much more of a grade or two below and blend them in the proper proportions to make the standard of the grade required, and can thus supply a demand that otherwise could not be filled, or which would go to another market. In this way can be made up of the intermediate grades between the highest and the lowest to supply any market in the world.

The advantages of this process in an export market like New York, which ships to Europe, the provinces, South America and the West Indies, are obvious. In Mr. Kirk's opinion "the time will come when the process will be in as general use as the roller process has become. But instead of being done by outside parties, it will be done by the millers themselves, who will have two or more separate mills in one in which to grind the different kinds of wheat separately and then blend the flours after they are finished, as is done now. In fact, there are already two large mills in the west—one in Cincinnati and another in St. Louis—which have done so, and although this flour is not yet as well known it is superior to the best patent Minnesota that comes to this market or ever was made. This change will be forced upon all the large millers in the country until the blending of winter and spring flours will become as general as the patent or roller process now is, because the flour thus produced will be as much superior to the patents as they are to the old straights. With every year," said he, "the milling of wheat is being more and more improved, until it will eventually be reduced to a scientific basis instead of the experimental one upon which each miller has conducted it according to his individual experience and skill, or that of his miller. Even now most of the large millers employ an expert to see that the proper machinery is in use, and that it runs properly and with the least cost of water power and waste, and also to see that nothing goes to waste about the mill and that the wheat of different kinds is milled to the best advantage, as well as that it is separated into the different grades of flour in the most economical manner."—*New York Commercial Bulletin*.

### Insurance Briefs.

*The New York Insurance Monitor* has recently had a good deal to say about what it calls "Jew risks," virtually charging that the Jews are fire starters in New York city, and therefore dangerous risks.

*Price Current:* A comparison of the insurance business of 1886 with that of 1887 shows that the average rate has declined and that the loss and expense rates have increased. An investigation of the term business and the results obtained show that that business is proving unprofitable. It was a great mistake for companies to have ever engaged in term business.

It was one of the deceptions of brokers' and solicitors to swell the amount of their commissions.

Samuel Mick, the Portage la Prairie, Man., fire bug, gets five years in the penitentiary. The evidence against White was insufficient for conviction.

The First of July is close at hand, the time when the patriotic boy must be turned loose with fireworks of every description to set fire to the property in his neighborhood. Every town in the country is placed in danger on the First of July by the use of fireworks. The man who deliberately sets fire to a building is punished by imprisonment. The man or boy who sets fire to a building by the careless use of fireworks is but little less guilty of incendiarism, and yet his crime is called an accident, and he goes unpunished. There are laws in most municipalities against the use of fireworks where they endanger property, but the officers who are sworn to enforce the laws rarely enforce them. The best way to break up the vicious practice is for insurance companies to insert a clause in their policies providing that they shall not be liable for loss or damage from fire started by fireworks.

### Western Notes.

The Brandon agency of the Massey Manufacturing Company is said to have orders for 100 binders.

The crops about Lethbridge are said by the *News*, to be very good. "Grass is the best for the time of year we have ever seen and stock of all kinds look well."

Sixty Islanders have arrived from Dakota, where some of them have been living for years. They went on west and will locate in the Red Deer district north of Calgary.

The output of coal at Lethbridge keeps gradually increasing and soon 600 tons a day will be the average. Over 550 tons have been taken out in one day recently. Several new drifts have been opened.

Rapid City, Man., *Spectator*: The woolen mill is again running. Wool is not coming in very fast, and unless it begins to move pretty soon the supply for the mill will have to be brought from the west. The price of wool at present is 12 cents per pound at the factory.

Quite a number of settlers are going into the Rainy River country, east of the Lake of the Woods. There is a tract of splendid farming land in this district, but railway communication is needed. In the summer season the country is reached by steamers from Rat Portage.

Brandon *Times*: The board of trade has been doing good work this year in their efforts to induce settlers to locate in the vicinity of Brandon and their latest attempt to bring the city before incoming settlers deserves especial credit. We refer to the arrangements made for cheap excursions to this point from Winnipeg in connection with the C. P. R. excursions from Ontario. The board sent two men to Winnipeg to meet the excursion trains and to attract the attention of visitors to this city and district. Notwithstanding the difficulties the board has met with its efforts, so far, have been successful.