

Overproduction a Humbug.

If the press correctly reflects public opinion, it is evident from the recent utterances that the idea has become very prevalent, both in this country and Europe, that the production of wheat has fairly overtaken consumption, and that with another good harvest, generally, further overproduction and depression of the present remarkably low prices will be the result. This is what may be termed the popular view, and is, no doubt chiefly due to the mere fact that prices are thus low. There appears to be a small minority, however, and included in it is *The Journal*, which views the situation from an entirely different standpoint, and which believes that the popular judgment is founded upon an incorrect understanding or confusion of the terms, quantity and price, and of their true relations. The key to the present low value of wheat is not overproduction, but a glut of ocean steamer tonnage and excessively cheap inland transportation rates in the United States. The fact, however, that the predominating opinion attributes this low value to excessive production has unquestionably had a very strong influence in bringing it about. There is not a scintilla of evidence that the world is overstocked with wheat. Any such ideas are looked upon as a delusion. At harvest time in 1882—only two years ago, bear in mind—the world's wheat stores were at a notoriously low point. In proportion to our needs, the stock of old grain in this country had not been so small, probably, in a quarter of a century. All Europe also held very moderate supplies. Now, as a whole, it is well understood that the wheat and rye harvests of Europe and America last year were not up to those gathered in an average of years. The United States wheat crop was more than 100,000,000 bushels short of that of the preceding year. England had a fair acreable yield, but on a greatly reduced acreage. France secured barely an average crop, while Russia and Germany were largely deficient in rye as compared with a good crop year. India exported a reduced quantity, and Australia gathered a decidedly poor harvest. If, then, there is such a superabundance of wheat in the world, as is so commonly asserted, where did it come from? As previously intimated, there is no superabundance, there has been no overproduction, it is all a delusion and a snare. Because wheat is so cheap is because it has cost, and still costs, so much less money than in former years to transfer the grain from the producer to the consumer. The consumer is the gainer, and ship-owners and west European wheat growers are the losers. Wheat can be transported from Chicago to Liverpool for ten cents per bushel. Two large steamers were chartered at Philadelphia a few days ago to load for a British port of call at 2s. 10½d. per quarter of 480 pounds. Cheap freights and not overproduction have reduced wheat values, and are impoverishing and demoralizing European agriculturists. There is a steady but certain diminution in the production there of nearly every kind of staple food articles for man or beast that they import. From one decade to another their censuses show a diminished area under cereals and a smaller of live-stock. Meanwhile, their population

steadily increases, and necessarily, of course, their food requirements also, and as present low prices of wheat offer little encouragement to the enlargement of the wheat area in any of the exporting countries, it is not unlikely that production will have reached the maximum in the present year. And as freights can scarcely fall lower, the conclusion is that wheat prices will not. It may further be said that in view of the contingencies to which the crops in Europe and America will be exposed during the next six to ten weeks, the chances for a rise in wheat prices are greater than those for a fall.—*Miller's Journal*.

Difficulties in the Way of Reciprocity.

It is evident from the remarks of Congressman Hitt, who is charged with the preparation of the report on reciprocity, that obtaining a favorable recommendation of the subject to the President, will be only the initial difficulty in the negotiation of a treaty. Mr. Hitt characterizes the old treaty as one-sided and unsatisfactory because embracing only what Canada had to sell, the products of the farm, forest and mine, and excluding manufactures, and he intimates that in a new treaty the Americans would expect free admission of their manufactures into the Dominion markets. But if we were ourselves willing to grant that concession, the connection with Great Britain makes it impossible to entertain the proposition. While Canada unquestionably enjoys the right to regulate her own tariff, nothing is more certain than that we cannot discriminate against the Mother Country in favor of a foreign power. If, on the other hand, it is urged that the duties on manufactures included in a reciprocity treaty should be abandoned altogether by Canada, so as to obviate the difficulty arising out of the British connection, two equally formidable obstacles crop out, first, that of the loss of revenue derived from customs duties, and secondly, and chiefly, the opposition of the United States to the free admission of British products into the Dominion. The Americans would assuredly not consent to Canada being made an underground railway for the passage of British manufactures into their country free of duty. There is, too, the position of our own manufacturing interests to be considered, which under reciprocity would encounter serious difficulties in competition with those of the United States.—*Montreal Gazette*.

General Notes.

It is claimed that the bucket shops are rapidly closing up through the smaller towns in the Western States.

JOHN MCTAVISH, of Minnedosa, has abandoned his rafts of cordwood for the present year leaving them near the mouth of the Rolling river. Jermyn & Bolton's saw logs are down, and Major Douglas expects his to arrive in a few days.

At the recent meeting of shareholders of the Bank of Montreal, it was stated that the number of shares "on the street," or in other words, held on speculation, is only 4,600, as against 7,000 a year ago, showing an important investment demand during the year.

The Bell Telephone Co., of Canada.

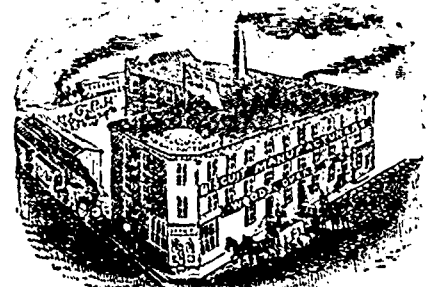
ANDW. ROBERTSON, President. C. F. SWE, Vice-President
C. P. SELATON, Secretary-Treasurer.

This Company, which owns the Telephone Patents in Canada of Bell, Blake, Edison, Phelps, Gray and others will furnish instruments of different styles, and applicable to a variety of uses. It will arrange to connect places not having telegraphic facilities with the nearest telegraph office, or it will build private lines for individuals or firms connecting their different places of business or residence. This company is also prepared to manufacture Telegraph and Electrical Instruments, Electro-Medical apparatus, Fire Alarm apparatus, Magnets for Mills, Electric Gas-lighting apparatus, Burglar alarms, Hotel and House Annunciators, Electric Call-bells, &c. Any further information relating hereto can be obtained from the Company.

NO. 12 HOSPITAL STREET, MONTREAL,
OR FROM

MR. F. G. WALSH AGENT, WINNIPEG.

N.B.—All persons using Telephones not licensed by this Company are hereby respectfully notified that they are liable to prosecution and for damages for infringement and will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.



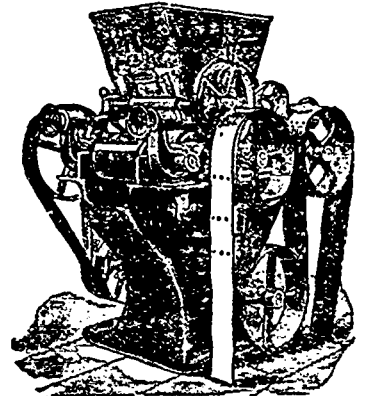
Manufacturers of

BISCUIT—every variety. Brooms. Coffee & Spices. Self-Raising Flour.

The Trade only supplied, and on best terms. Send for Price List.

WOODS, OVENS & CO.,

Factory and Office—Corner Higgins, Fonseca and Argyle Streets, Winnipeg.



Send for Illustrated Catalogue

—OF—
W. D. GRAY'S

(Of Milwaukee, Wis.),

PATENT NOISELESS

ROLLER MILLS,

As used in the system of milling by
GRADUAL REDUCTION.

Manufactured exclusively in Canada by
MILLER BROS. & MITCHELL,
Machinists and Millrights,
MONTREAL