

## EDITORIALS.

## A GIGANTIC AND GROWING EVIL.

THE general public hear of "corners" on various articles of commerce and have a vague idea of their injurious effects, but the extent of their operations and the vast and widespread disaster which they occasion are not known even to people who endeavor to keep themselves posted on all matters of current interest. An article which appears in the August number of the *North American Review*, handles this subject in a very interesting manner, and goes into details with which few persons outside of the inner rings of the Exchanges are at all acquainted. It is entitled "Making Bread Dear," and is written in taking style by Henry D. Lloyd.

From this we learn how the products of the country are manipulated and speculated upon, and how the markets for their sale and purchase are regulated, not in the interest of either the producer or the consumer, or even of the general dealer, but of the cliques of capitalists which rule the Exchanges and enrich themselves by the ruin of thousands and the oppression of millions. The manufacture of prices, it appears, is a business that does not depend altogether upon the supposed inexorable laws of supply and demand. It is worked by certain combinations. It is controlled by "bosses." And purchases are made which largely exceed the actual supply, and sales are effected which are greatly in excess of the actual demand. This may seem strange, but it is nevertheless true. It is done in one way by the purchase and sale of "futures."

"Farmers and county grain buyers who want to take advantage of high prices, but are too busy to ship their wheat to market, can telegraph a broker on the Board to sell for future delivery. The miller, if wheat looks cheap, can buy for future delivery. These contracts are 'futures.'"

These contracts are negotiable and are used for purposes of speculation. Of course every article represented by these "futures" must be actually forthcoming on demand by the time agreed. If a million bushels of wheat are sold in "futures" a million bushels of wheat must be produced at the required time; if not, heavy damages are collectible. But sales of "futures" are made not only of grain waiting to be shipped, but of that expected by the shipper, and speculation often turns over and over goods that cannot be produced on the market. It is a frequent practice of the millionaires who manipulate the Boards of Exchange to not only "corner" the surplus of a crop by buying it up wherever possible, but to "squeeze" the dealers in "futures" by purchasing the contracts for future delivery and "cornering" them. Demand is made of the dealers for delivery, and that being impossible, heavy damages are extorted, often to the ruin of the unfortunate dealer who cannot fulfil his contract, because those who have "cornered" the "futures" have made it impossible for him to do so. The price of wheat is run up, but not in the interest of the farmer, whose grain is disposed of, but of the cliques who have made the "corner," and with corresponding detriment to the public for whom bread is thus made dear. One of the "corner" operations which have been so disastrous to the country is thus described in the article referred to:

"The wheat corner of 1879 was commanded by a New Yorker. It began with an inspired chorus of prophecies of low prices, which continued as long as the cliques were buying of the farmers. The price was run down to eighty-one and a half cents a bushel. When all the wheat and wheat contracts to be had were obtained, the price was raised to one dollar and thirty-three cents. In every way the results of this corner were deplorable. The markets were crazed. The cliques held, according to their own statement, twenty million bushels, and, according to the estimate of close observers in the trade, seventy million bushels. At one time, their wheat was piled up in the elevators and on the railroad tracks, intentionally stopping the way, so that no other wheat could be got to market by the farmers and dealers.

Wheat was refused to exporters at prices they could afford to pay. The English buyers went to Bombay and Calcutta; and the East Indies, which sent their first sample to Liverpool not ten years ago, have, in consequence, taken a place next only to us in supplying the British market. During the winter, four hundred vessels lay for months in New York harbor, the owners pleading for wheat, even at ruinously low rates. Many of them ran into debt, and the majority of them finally had to sail away to seek cargoes elsewhere. When the time came to despatch this wheat from Chicago and New York, to Europe, to put it out of the way, the head of the cliques said to the railroads: "I will give you so many million bushels to carry; if you do not take it at my rate I will ship it all by lake in the spring." The cutting of rates which ensued was one of the irritating causes of the war that followed among the trunk lines. In the same way syndicates have repeatedly forced the navigators of the lakes to take such rates as they chose to pay, for there was no one to compete with the engrossing shipper. Transportation, overtasked at one time and at another idle, is hopelessly deranged; and all the banking and other business that must attend the movement of the crops goes by fits and starts. Three out of every four flouring mills of the country were kept idle for over two months. One of the oldest members of the Produce Exchange prepared for the Legislature an estimate that this syndicate, by not selling, and by not letting others sell, and by fleecing those who had been inveigled into dealing with them, and by the injury that had been done to the millers, the shipping interest, the exporters, and the consumers of flour, had caused a loss to the country of not less than three hundred million dollars."

The pork corner, which came at the same time as this in wheat, was described as follows by the *London Times*:

"Amid the turmoil of the Presidential election, there has been closed one of the largest and most successful speculations which has ever excited the brain of Chicago—the Armour pork corner. Its influence in advancing prices was felt in every part of the world. A Chicago dispatch of November 5th, says: 'In July, 1879, after one member of the firm of Armour & Co. had returned from Europe, where he had been taking observations of the pork market, the firm began buying pork (at eight dollars a barrel), and in December, when it had risen to fourteen dollars a barrel, closed out, making a profit of two million dollars. Not satisfied that it had reached the highest price, they continued buying until pork had dropped to nine and a quarter dollars a barrel, absorbing their profit and an additional million. In April of this year they began buying at ten dollars a barrel, and bought up three hundred and fifty thousand barrels of pork, and one million two hundred and fifty thousand barrels of 'futures.' For the last three months they have been closing out their gigantic purchases at prices ranging from sixteen to eighteen and a half dollars. They cleared over seven million dollars on this deal, and are winners on the two deals to the extent of six million dollars.'"

"The price of pork was more than doubled, flour was put up an average of two dollars a barrel, and beef steak at least one cent a pound, as the result of these manipulations. This increase in the cost of living has not subsided. Pork and meat continued to advance. They were higher the next year and higher still last year, when pork sold for twenty-four dollars and seventy-five cents a barrel. Wheat, too, though it has fluctuated violently, has remained in the hand of the manipulators, and every year since the corner of 1879, the average price the mill has had to pay has been higher than that of the year before."

The increase in the cost of living thus produced has helped to bring about the strikes which laboring people in many parts of the country have engaged in. Their wages have not grown with the price of food, and the need of more means to obtain actual necessities has driven them to attempt to combine against the capitalists to force an increase of wages. These strikes have proven disastrous to both employer and employed, and so have been an injury to the country. Here is another extract from the interesting article in the *Review*:

"One summer afternoon, a year ago, at a party of Chicago business men were idling in their yacht over the cool waters of Lake Michigan, one of them pointed out a great lake propeller shouldering its way eastward. 'There goes some of our 'corner' wheat to Liverpool,' he said. Propellers, sailing vessels, railroad cars were hurrying millions of bushels away from Chicago to put it out of the reach of the millers, the exporters and the traders on the Board. It must, at any cost, be made scarce and dear for everybody. It was wanted for flour and as the stock-in-trade of the Board. But, as far as the bread eaters and the traders of this country were interested, it was thrown away, as the Dutch threw away the spices of the Moluccas. Such of it as Liverpool would take was sold at an average loss of ten cents a bushel, in order to extort twenty cents a bushel from the American consumer. Much of it lay for a long while stored in England unsold, while the working men and women from one end of the United States to the other questioned whether it is better to work for wages on which they cannot live, or not to work at all. One of the 'business' men of New York testified before the Corner Committee, that he sold corn to go to Europe for twenty-five cents a bushel less than he made the buyers in New York pay him. Another member of the New Produce Exchange said that he had seen the agents of the cornering cliques standing at the doors of the flour-mills bidding away the wheat that was needed for bread. None but a free people would submit to such wrongs."

"If there was any advantage to the farmer from such operations it would not be a natural advantage, but there is no advantage. These corners put prices down when the farmers want to sell, and put them up when the miller needs to buy. They exaggerate gambling by intensifying the fluctuations of price and they cripple legitimate business."

But the worst of this story is not yet told. These syndicates and cliques are beyond the reach of the law. Any member of the Board of Exchange who attempts to appeal to the courts from the ruin with which the operations of these corners may threaten to overwhelm him is likely to lose his seat as a member, worth many thousands of dollars, and thus also his means of livelihood. He is therefore compelled to submit to the arbitration of a committee of the Board, often composed in part of individuals interested in defeating his appeal. The New York Courts have ruled that the seat of a member is property and can be bought and sold; but the Exchange takes such a stand that the ruling is practically nullified and the member has no redress. The Illinois Courts have decided that these seats are not property, thus playing into the hands of the Board. Hence those members who have been cornered by the rich syndicates rightly named by Mr. Lloyd the "wealthy criminal class," have appealed for help and redress to the Courts in vain, the response being that the Board is a "voluntary association" and therefore not amenable to the courts. Thus though that corporation is created by the State, it is beyond the judicial jurisdiction of the State.

The remedy recommended by Mr. Lloyd is the establishment of tribunals composed of disinterested persons, to settle disputes that arise over schemes and secret combinations which now permit the Exchanges to rob the world of its daily bread. "Those who desire to prevent gambling and plundering from becoming the chief ends of the Exchanges, can do nothing more useful than to bring them back within the jurisdiction of the law."

It is demonstrated that the death-rate among the poor increases with the price of bread; also that the price of bread rises and falls as "corners" are made and broken. "Its prices are glued to the speculative quotations in wheat." The coffers of the wealthy criminals who rob their own associates, are enriched at the expense of the life-blood of millions. Their secret combinations not only ruin other dealers in food products, but bring suffering and want to hosts of their poorer fellow-creatures, and prepare the way for the spread of disease and the triumph of the grim monster—Death.

Are not these organizations, which are without sympathy and without humanity, cold, bloodless, fiendish and relentless speculations

on the needs of the masses and the failures of legitimate trade, among those "secret combinations" referred to in the Book of Mormon against which the prophets of old warned this great nation beforehand? (Read Mormon, chap. 9, v. 40; Ether, chap. 8, v. 22, etc.) They are among the signs of the times. They are sure to bring trouble, distress and disaster upon the country unless something is done in earnest to check their growing power. They who expose this greed and dishonorable oppression, do service to the cause of humanity and are deserving of commendation. "Making Bread Dear" is worthy the attention of our national legislators, and the gigantic evil therein exposed should engage the best efforts of our wisest statesmen, that it may be grappled with and peradventure be overcome.

## NULLIFICATION NONSENSE.

A DECISION recently given by the United States Circuit Court at Boston has stirred up the anti-Chinese papers to great anger. The Act of Congress for the prevention of the landing of Chinese laborers upon the shores of this country, except such as acquire that right through the treaty of 1868, seemed to satisfy the Mongolian-haters East and West. But it appears to have in it that kind of weakness that Daniel O'Connell ascribed to every act of Parliament, through which he said he could drive "a coach and four."

The case on which the decision was given was that of Ah Hong, a ship carpenter who was forcibly kept in the Boston harbor by the captain of a vessel. He demanded liberty to land on the ground that he shipped from Hong Kong, which is a British port, and that he was a British subject and therefore not a Chinese laborer within the meaning of the Acts of Congress. The Court sustained the application, and thus, it is claimed, threw open the doors of the country to thousands of Chinese laborers, who may come from Hong Kong, Ceylon, Singapore, Java, Borneo, etc., etc., claiming that they are not subjects of the Celestial Empire.

Much fault is found with the Court for this decision. But from what we can learn of the controversy it appears that the blame, if any, does not attach to the Court, but to the law on which the ruling was given. And further, it seems that if the law had been as stringent as some people think the Court should have ruled it to be, it would have been, in the opinion of Judge Nelson, who rendered the ruling, void on account of unconstitutionality. It will need special treaties with all the governments from whose colonies persons of Chinese birth may come to the United States, to make laws against their landing valid.

Some papers in finding fault with the Court claim that its ruling amounts to a nullification of the anti-Chinese law. It is amusing to see the nonsense indulged in by the use of the dreadful word "nullification." When the "Mormons" attempt to test in a legal manner the validity of any special measure designed or made use of to deprive them of vested or natural rights, they are accused of "nullification." As if they had no business to attempt to avail themselves of that protection for which governments are organized, nor to appeal to the Courts ordained to test the validity and meaning of legislative enactments.

And we notice too that the very papers which seem astounded that the "Mormons" have the temerity to hold opinions different from those arrived at by Courts, and which denounce the "Mormons" for having the audacity to criticize the ruling of a Judge, now do the very things for which they berate the "Mormons." They attack Judge Nelson as well as his decision. They accuse him of improper motives, charge that he favored a narrow technicality, huri at him the awful name of "nullifier" and set him up as an object for scorn and vituperation.

Is he not a Federal Judge? Has he not ruled on an Act of Congress according to authority duly vested in him? Does he not give reasons for his judicial opinion. Is not a certain portion of the power of one of the departments of the national government vested in his official person? How dare they, then, to take an opposite view from that which he has enunciated? If they were only

"Mormons" they would be "contumacious," "rebellious," "treasonable" and "nullifiers" or would-be nullifiers, themselves.

We have no doubt that the Court at Boston ruled according to the law as it appeared to the judgment of the Judge. There is a higher tribunal which can sit upon that decision. The anti-Chinese are afraid that the Supreme Court of the United States will sustain the decision of the lower court. And why? Evidently because the weakness is in the law itself coupled with certain constitutional restrictions, and therefore it is wrong to blame the Court, and perhaps it would be equally wrong to blame the law. Our national institutions are such that enactments which would exactly suit the anti-Chinese fanatics, and also the anti-"Mormon" fanatics, cannot be made, in harmony with the supreme law of the land, and the fault lies after all, not in the law, not in the courts, not in the Constitution, but in the individual who want their extreme notions carried into effect, even if the whole system of popular government under which we live, and have our liberties be entirely "nullified."

## UNIFORMING THE POLICE.

THE call for an increase of the police force uttered by the Salt Lake Herald, we believe is echoed by the people of this city generally. We have no doubt that it will be duly considered by the City Council, which has continually in view the needs of the municipality and also the means available to meet those requirements. More police means more expenditure, and this means higher taxes or retrenchment in some direction of outlay because we have no surplus city funds. We believe the citizens are safe in leaving the matter in the hands of the City Fathers.

In regard to another matter connected with this question, we do not endorse the opinions which some have expressed. That is in regard to placing the police in uniform. We do not think that at present this would be advisable. It should be borne in mind that we are in a western town where the customs of metropolitan growth and progress are not yet practicable. Our police have too double duty. They act as a constabulary and also a detective force. Much of their work is in ferreting out crime and tracing criminals; it is not altogether in making arrests. They must be at all times ready for either or all. The uniform of a policeman who has to act in these several capacities would be of disadvantage to him in all. It would be a sign to the gambler, the unlawful dealer in liquor, the distributor of the peace, the thief, the criminal of any kind, to conceal himself or cover up his nefarious doings when the "cop" was in sight. His very coat and hat as in other places, being prominent at a distance, would be the signal for "Here comes the peeler," and the scattering of offenders against the law. It would be also a shining mark for the bullet of the desperado. Before the uniformed officer could get into speaking proximity he would be a conspicuous target. The plea that his uniform would be a protection to the officer does not hold good in this part of the world. The slayer of our gallant Police Captain only wanted to know "Are you the officer?" before he leveled the murderous rifle at his body. A uniform would have made even the hesitation of that brief question needless. And a uniform on the brave man who made the arrest, in all probability would have been the mark for another shot that might have been equally fatal.

When arrests have to be made and the parties are unaware of the status of the officer, a simple exhibition of his star will set the matter right in a moment; that is as good a badge of office and as well known as a uniform that would single an officer out in a multitude or at a distance, and give the law-breaker the hint to decamp. In a city like this, subject to influxes of tramps, burglars, brutes, and desperadoes from various sources, we think it unwise to clothe our officers in such a manner that they would be easily avoided under some circumstances, and made a mark for easy attack under others. No. Instead of spending public money to fix up our officers in that way, use it to increase the force and we think the public will fully endorse the action.