

not trained in statistical computations; but fancy a train of 46,000 loaded freight cars, a train 350 miles long, reaching out along the line of the New-York Central Railway nearly to Rochester, and the great volume of the annual receipts of flour at Greater New-York cannot fail of appreciation. Yet this only a little more than half measures the tribute of the Western wheat fields to the commerce of the metropolis, for to the receipts of flour must be added 28,922,427 bushels of wheat received during the same period, enough to fill 11,000 freight cars, and lengthen the train over 100 miles, on through Buffalo and Cleveland, and yet forty miles beyond. Then the fertile plains of Kansas and Nebraska gave up only a tithe of their plenty, and added 25,744,978 bushels of corn to the



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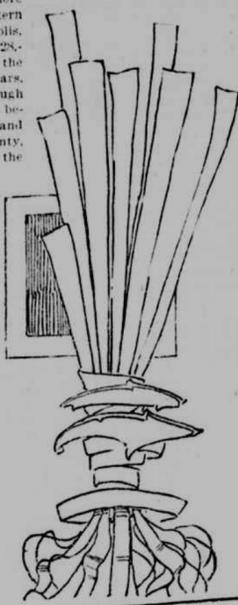
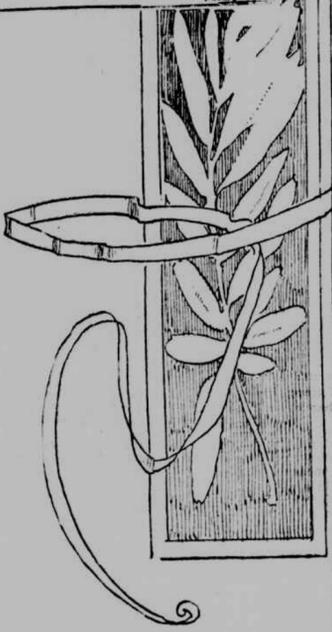
MEKIM MEAD & WHITE ARCHT.

FLOUR AND GRAIN TRADE.

CEREALS AND FLOUR FOR GREATER NEW-YORK WOULD LOAD A TRAIN 1,300 MILES LONG, REACHING BEYOND ST. LOUIS.

NEARLY ONE-HALF OF THE BREADSTUFFS ARE EXPORTED TO ENGLAND—ENORMOUS QUANTITIES TO GERMANY AND NORTH SEA PORTS—2,500,000 BARRELS OF FLOUR ANNUALLY USED IN THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT.

Times have changed since Bartholomew Gosnold, mindful only of the exigencies of his own larder, planted the first handful of wheat in American soil on a little island in Buzzard's Bay, away back in the year 1621. Since then, during almost three centuries of seedtime and harvest, the fruit of the old Puritan's industry has multiplied and been carried westward with the march of civilization, increasing in a far more rapid ratio than the growth of population, and pouring back its surplus over the ever-lengthening lines of transportation to the metropolis of the East. It would have required something more than prophetic vision in Bartholomew Gosnold's time—it even sorely taxes the credulity of men of this generation—to comprehend the results of that first wheat-planting in America. To say that 6,807,444 barrels of flour were received at Greater New-York during the year 1895 conveys very little real knowledge of the magnitude of the quantity to a mind



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flowing stream of grain, 36,000 cars, extending along the lake shore for 280 miles, to a point within thirty miles of Chicago, only to be still further augmented by 25,207,100 bushels of oats and more than 8,000,000 bushels of rye, barley and malt, and the brakeman on the train, after coupling on this latest addition, would have to walk back 300 miles over the roofs of 47,000 cars to reach the caboose, and when there would find himself 130 miles west of St. Louis and 1,300 miles from Greater New-York.

To move this mass of produce, upon which Greater New-York and Great Britain alike depend for sustenance, would require 4,300 locomotives and the employment of 20,000 men in the capacity of conductors, engineers, firemen and brakemen, and for every day of the year it would mean the arrival in Greater New-York of 470 loaded freight cars, or twelve trains of nearly forty cars each. Based upon the average price of breadstuffs prevailing in the year 1895, the value of this trainload of plenty would be found numbers \$8,000,000.

Thus, in a way which it is thought will appeal forcibly to the general mind, it is brought to view a more or less adequate notion of the importance of the business in breadstuffs to this city of multiplied industries and enormous capital, a business whose magnitude escapes general notice for the reason that the enormous daily arrivals of grain and flour are divided among a dozen great railway trunk lines, beside the large percentage that comes in by way of the canal and Hudson River, and by the coastwise steamers from Southern ports. The constant stream from all these converging lines flow together and through the port of Greater New-York as through the throat of a funnel and out again through scores of channels of distribution, sometimes without the stoppage of an hour, going direct into the holds of steamers bound for the English Channel or the Mediterranean or perhaps the Spanish Main or far away Cape Town; but more often pausing by the way in the tall elevators that stand like sentinels upon the shores of North River, or in the warehouses that stretch in unsightly monotony along the Brooklyn water front.

Two-thirds of the flour received in 1895, four-fifths of the wheat, three-fourths of the corn, and 6 per cent of the oats and other grains were exported during the year, or, to be exact, 4,398,259 barrels of flour, 24,239,750 bushels of wheat, 19,584,847 bushels of corn and 1,928,167 bushels of oats and other grains. It is interesting to follow to their ultimate destinations the outflowing currents of this mighty stream of breadstuffs, as indicating the extent to which the old World and the tropical belt of this hemisphere are dependent upon the agricultural industry of the United States for food. Two million barrels of flour, 11,000,000 bushels of wheat, and nearly 5,500,000 bushels of corn, or almost one-half of the entire volume of exports from Greater New-York, went to Great Britain; 5,000,000 barrels of flour, nearly 4,000,000 bushels of wheat and more than 4,000,000 bushels of corn to German, Dutch, Belgian and the North Sea ports; 2,000,000 barrels of flour and almost 1,000,000 bushels of wheat to the West Indies and South and Central America; nearly 3,000,000 bushels of wheat to Spain and Portugal, and the remainder was distributed in varying unimportant quantities into almost every inhabited land on the globe excepting India and Australia, which were themselves large producers and exporters of wheat, but where the climatic uncertainty attending wheat culture is so great that in deficiencies with wheat from the Pacific Coast of America.

It is a curious fact, and worthy of note, that with the beginning of the exportation of flour was laid the foundation of the commercial supremacy of Greater New-York; and that beginning was made possible by the creation of a monopoly by legislative enactment. In 1688 the then imperial and despotic Governor, Edmund Andros, wanted to the citizens of New-York—the name having been changed from New-Amsterdam four years before—the exclusive privilege of bolting flour and shipping it outside the province, and forbade all other towns to engage in that business, under penalty of the forfeiture of their charters, and despite the persistent efforts of the townsmen of the interior to secure the repeal of this act, it was not only continued in force for six years, but was supplemented by a further grant of the sole right to pack flour and make bread for export. The weight and price of bread were also regulated by the same act. The impetus which this protected industry gave to the commerce of the port carried the gross value of its annual exports from \$10,000 to more than \$20,000,000, increased the number of ships from three to sixty, and brought about the building of 600 new houses during the six years of the continuance of the monopoly, and pushed New-York to that foremost position in the maritime and commercial world of America which it has maintained to this day.

The gradual growth of the export business in flour and grain from \$10,000 a year in 1688 to \$40,000,000 in the year 1895, was necessarily accompanied by a like rapid growth in the facilities for storage and rapid handling. The old-fashioned low-storied warehouses, whose grain was piled up in sacks and had to be handled a sack at a time by hand, gave place in time and simultaneously with the advent of improved milling machinery to the modern elevator, where grain is stored in bulk in deep bins and moved from bin to bin, cleaned, weighed and mixed by the power of steam. Steam shovels for unloading cars, belt and automatic scales, steel screw conveyors and bucket elevators, have supplanted the old, slower and more cumbersome methods of handling grain, and have done their part in solving the great problem in the business world of the increase of capacity by the saving of time, or, as Thoreau puts it, by "reducing the denominator." Elevators have multiplied with the increasing business of the railways, until there are now in the port of Greater New-York thirty-two elevators and warehouses having a combined storage capacity of more than 20,000,000 bushels of grain, and a transfer capacity of half a million bushels per hour. The greater part of the transferring of grain to vessels in the harbor is done by drawing it out from the warehouses into canalboats, which are then towed alongside floating elevators of which there are in the harbor a fleet of twenty-two, some of them having a transfer capacity of 10,000 bushels per hour.



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