

9-10 EDWARD VII., A. 1910

An hon. MEMBER.—That is the feeling?

Mr. WILSON.—Yes, both here and in England.

Mr. HERRON.—Have you sufficient knowledge of the country to know if the areas are very much taken up?

Mr. WILSON.—Yes, all the large areas are taken up—all the large areas are held by private interests.

Mr. HERRON.—Still a great many of them are available for purchase?

Mr. WILSON.—Oh, yes. I often wonder how an export duty on nickel itself would do.

The CHAIRMAN.—How would an import duty on nickel or material containing nickel do? Would not that answer the purpose? At present they sell it back to us?

Mr. WILSON.—A very small quantity is used here. There is more used in Great Britain than anywhere else, and after that the United States and Germany. Germany has no nickel of its own; nor has the United States any nickel of its own.

An hon. MEMBER.—We might keep it for our own navy.

An hon. MEMBER.—Is there any source of further information that you could suggest in regard to matters that would enable the committee to make a recommendation, and to deal with the thing in a complete form?

Mr. WILSON.—I do not know any person who has devoted so much time to this subject as I have. In the last five years I have taken trips abroad in connection with this matter. I have been in New Caledonia, and I know Sudbury.

The CHAIRMAN.—Were you in any other parts of Europe besides Great Britain?

Mr. WILSON.—Yes, in France and Germany.

A MEMBER.—Is the New Caledonia mine controlled by a company?

Mr. WILSON.—Yes, by the Rothschilds, practically, and they work in agreement with the International Nickel Company limiting the output and fixing the price. The price never varies from year to year.

An hon. MEMBER.—No fluctuation?

Mr. WILSON.—No, and they have tied up all the government manufacturers in Europe by long term contracts at special prices, so it is absolutely impossible to get anything from them, that is in the way of making contracts to take a nickel supply.

An hon. MEMBER.—And Germany?

Mr. WILSON.—It is about the same as the United States.

Mr. CONGDON.—I suppose if the price lowered, there would be a greater quantity consumed?

Mr. WILSON.—Infinitely greater. If it were sold at between twenty and thirty cents a pound the consumption would be increased three or four times what it is. It would be adopted for very many other uses.

Mr. MACDONALD.—From your knowledge, assuming nickel was sold at the price you just mentioned, is there plenty of profit in it for the capital that might be invested in it?

Mr. WILSON.—Certainly. As I say the cost of production now does not exceed 15 cents a pound.

An hon. MEMBER.—Is the smelting of these ores more difficult than that of copper?

Mr. WILSON.—Not a bit.

An hon. MEMBER.—You state then that the cost of production of nickel is no greater than copper—what is the price of copper?

Mr. WILSON.—Thirteen cents. Of course the cost of production in Sudbury exceeds that of producing copper from ordinary copper ore as you have to separate the other metals.

The CHAIRMAN.—I am informed that the copper they get pays for the whole cost and they have the nickel to the good—do you think that is correct?

Mr. WILSON.—That is not correct; the cost exceeds the value of the copper.