

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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Registration of Factories—Certificates for Makers.

Registration, or, in other words, licensing of cheese factories, creameries, and other establishments for the manufacture of dairy products, and certification of the butter and cheese makers employed therein, are the two essential features of a bill styled "The Dairy Products Act," introduced into the Ontario Legislature by the Minister of Agriculture, Hon. Jas. S. Duff. An outline of the provisions appeared in our news-columns last week. Briefly, it requires that on or before January 1st, 1910, all creameries, cheese factories, milk condensories, milk-powder factories, or other such establishments, shall be registered with the Minister of Agriculture on forms supplied, nature of business, location, and other information required by him, being given. After the date named, no such business may be carried on in a place not so registered, without application first being made to the Minister, and permission granted, following a report signed by an inspector. Refusal to grant permission may be based upon lack of proper equipment or unsanitary conditions. Appeal from the Minister's decision may be made to the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council. Section 6 provides for the closing of a factory upon adverse report by an inspector as to sanitary conditions or equipment.

The seventh section requires chief makers in factories or creameries, after 1911, to hold certificates of qualification from the Dairy Schools at Guelph or Kingston, a sub-section providing, however, that, in place of such certificate, a permit may be issued at any time upon the report of an inspector upon the general grounds of experience and competency.

Registration of factories, although ostensibly designed to insure against the establishment or running of co-operative plants upon unsatisfactory sites, or with inadequate equipment, is presumably aimed at regulation of the small-factory evil. In parts of Eastern Ontario the large number of small, poorly-equipped, ill-situated and poorly-manned factories have long been an obstacle

to progress, and the location of new ones works injustice to men or companies who already have money invested in existing plants. By requiring a certain standard of equipment and sanitation, the Department of Agriculture, through its inspectors, will be given authority to minify this evil, although it seems to us that unnecessary interference with existing enterprises might well have been specified as an additional ground for withholding a permit to new factories. Also, it would seem well to require annual registration, and to devise some more certain means of bringing prospective builders of new factories into direct touch with the dairy inspectors before they might have gone the length of erecting their building.

On the other hand, the bill contains one very commendable section, which provides for withdrawing of a permit upon report of an inspector. The effect of this will be to strengthen the hands of the Department's staff of instructors.

The section providing for certification of makers has been included on the recommendation of dairy leaders in the Eastern part of the Province. It is calculated to insure the more general training in dairy schools of head makers, and to raise the standard of this important profession. Criticism from the patron's standpoint has been that it might tend to the formation of a makers' union to raise wages by combination. Whether it does or not, will depend upon the wisdom of the makers. Other objections have been urged, but we can only hope that, if enacted (which it has not been at date of writing), a feasible basis of estimation of uncertified makers may be arrived at, and the whole business kept free of any vestige of political influence. On the whole, this bill is a hopeful step in advance; at any rate, that portion providing for registration of factories.

For Absolute Free Trade.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

May I again venture to offer a few remarks of kindly criticism on your position re tariff. The tone and spirit of your editorial of October 1st, 1908, are simply splendid, but it appears to me there are one or two weak points in your line of reasoning, to which, in the interests of agriculture, I wish to draw attention.

You say, "The way to make the manufacturer prosperous is to make the farmer prosperous, and the way to do that is to reduce the tariff to a minimum. The way to build a house is to lay the foundation first." It is this minimum I wish to speak of. You would not think to lay the foundation of a house, and wilfully include even a minimum of decay, or that which would produce decay or weakness.

Your whole preceding line of argument goes to show—and, I think, rightly—that it is the present maximum tariff that is sapping the vitals of agriculture.

If the maximum is doing so, so, also, will the minimum, in a lesser degree.

Further, who is to determine the specific meaning, or amount, of the word, as applied to the tariff.

Now, carry this line of reasoning to a little further on in the same article, where you say that, "Your own view, admirably expressed by a farmer, was that the tariff should be so adjusted as to produce a maximum of customs revenue."

Why should the tariff, which, as you show, bears aggressively on the farmer, be so adjusted as to wring from him a maximum of customs revenue?

Is it any wonder, in the face of such a giving-away, by an influential agricultural journal, of the position under which agriculture is carried on, that the quick-witted youth leaves the farm for the city, where, as you put it in your issue of October 15th, "Opportunities are found to realize on the labor of others." The "others," if searchingly looked for, will be found to be none other than the farmers.

In conclusion, why should not "the exceptionally clever boy," or, for that matter, the exceptionally dull boy, either, be able to produce more wealth for himself at farming—the primary industry—than anywhere else, with an equal effort? Victoria, Australia. J. BREWSTER.

By leaving a fifth of the farm in protected woodland, and properly working the rest under a system of short rotation, thousands of us would make more money than we do.

Principles of Tariff Protection.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

The wisdom or unwisdom of the present system of tariff protection in Canada, is a point which has been much debated, and, I suppose, will continue to be debated for years to come. Adopted originally as a temporary measure, intended to establish urban industries more rapidly in our young country, and to be withdrawn when these were once established, it has apparently become a settled system. There is practically no political division on the question, and politicians have apparently made up their minds that the system is here to stay. Perhaps it is fortunate that this question does not figure prominently in party politics to-day, for it allows us to consider the question on its own merits, and free from party bias. It is the duty of every citizen to consider the question carefully, and to decide whether or not it is wise to have this system fastened upon us permanently. To the farmer, particularly, as the one who has everything to lose, and nothing to gain, through the system, the question is one of very great importance.

It is my intention to deal with the subject specifically—to speak not of theories, but of facts. But, in order to thoroughly understand the subject, it is necessary to first consider the theory, leaving the facts to be dealt with later.

"Protection" is afforded to home industries by means of a customs tax, more or less heavy, levied on the products of similar industries entering from other countries. This increases the price at which they can be sold by just the amount of the tax. Without the tax, the selling price is made up of three items: cost of manufacture, freight charges and profits. With the tax, these items remain the same as before, but have the amount of the tax added to them. Thus, the selling price to the consumer is raised by the full amount of the tax. But, not only is the price of the imported article raised, but the price of the homemade one is raised to the same level. There cannot be two prices for the same articles, even if one is homemade and the other imported. In this way, regardless of cost of production, the selling price of the homemade article is artificially enhanced by the full amount of the customs tax. The protected industries are aided by being enabled to charge a higher price for their product than they otherwise could. They are given a bonus equal to the amount of customs tax, and are allowed to collect it from the public in the form of increased prices.

But it is worth noting that this only applies to those industries whose products do not fully supply the needs of the home market. Where the products of any industry more than supply the home market, so that a surplus must seek a market abroad, the advantage of the protective duty cannot be taken advantage of, unless there be a combine to fix prices, so that there shall be two prices, one designed for the home market, and the other for competition with the world. In the absence of such a combine, prices will be uniform for the whole of that commodity, and must be fixed by the price received for the exported surplus. In Canada, the one great industry that is not, and cannot be—at least for many years to come—benefited in the slightest degree by a system of protection, is agriculture. Our greatest natural resource is our soil, and, as that resource is just developed, it is now, has always been, and will be for a very long time, true that our agricultural products will be more than we need, we shall have to depend on a foreign market for the selling of our surplus. This, of course, carries with it the truth that agriculture in Canada cannot benefit to any extent by protection.

It has always been urged by the opponents of protection that it can only benefit the protected industries by hampering the other industries of the country. This is true. The higher price of the protected commodity is paid, not by the foreigner who sends his goods here, but by the people who buy and use that commodity. The full effect of the tax, as a moment's reflection will show, falls ultimately on those industries which either are not protected, or cannot, from the nature of their production, reap the benefits of protection. These are the strongest industries, and those best suited to the country. Thus, there is always the danger that those industries naturally adapted to the country will be held back for those not adapted.

This is the reasoning advanced by those who oppose protection in any form. Yet, there may be protection wisely applied to the benefit of the nation. Where it is given only to those industries which are likely to flourish, and is given as a temporary help, the effect may be to establish many industries that otherwise, exposed to full competition from similar industries already established, could never be started. It is, however, a dangerous system in an case, on account of the difficulty of applying it wisely. It at once creates a class of beneficiaries, whose interest it is to perpetuate the system. Such a class, under our form of government, may gain great power, and use it to the harm of the whole community.