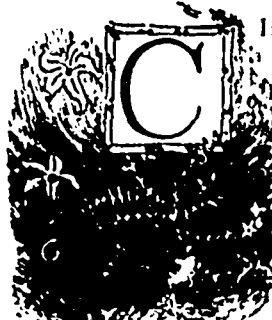


## THE UNITED STATES TARIFF.



CHANGES are imminent in the United States tariff. A wave of free trade feeling has swept over the country and the politicians must bend before its force or be submerged. The Ways and Means Committee are hearing what manufacturers have to say, and some of these have queer ideas about tariff reform. For example here is a report of the ideas

of the hat manufacturers:

"The hat manufacturers of Newark and Orange, N. J., in conjunction with the hat manufacturers throughout the country, are now interested in the probable action of the present congress in the matter of tariff on hats.

"The McKinley bill, through the efforts of the Manufacturers' Association, increased the duty on hats to 55 per cent. ad valorem, and manufacturers are anxious that this duty shall remain as it is. The committee of manufacturers has just laid a statement before the Ways and Means Committee. The memorial cites several reasons why the present duty should be retained. All materials used in making a hat are subject to duty; 55 per cent. of the cost of a hat consists of labor, manufacturers abroad use the same machines as are used here, and can work to the same advantage, but with much less to pay for wages than here. The memorial makes a comparison of wages and says that a hat costing \$15 a dozen in this country can be produced for \$8.18 in Europe. The claim is made that full protection would require a tariff of 85 per cent. The hatting industry of this country employs over 25,000 persons."

Special attention is drawn to the phrase, "Full protection would require a tariff of 85 per cent." Supposing somebody would suggest that the Canadian tariff on hats be raised to even 55 per cent., so as to equal the United States present rate, he would be denounced as a villain. Did he dare suggest that 85 per cent. would only be "full protection," he would be furnished with an apartment in one of our asylums at the public expense.

On September 18th the hearing before the Ways and Means Committee was opened by John W. Stewart of New York, sales agent for Lister & Co., Bradford, England, makers of seal plushes. The tariff of 1890, he said, raised the rate on these goods so as to make it almost prohibitive and deprived the Government of a large revenue. The domestic production began in 1889, but the goods made were inferior, under the prohibitory duty domestic manufacturers raised the prices. Before 1891 nine factories had been started by persons from abroad who had transferred their workshops to the United States to share the large profits. The competition proved ruinous and a majority of the manufacturers had failed. This is but an example of the great and destructive competition which results from a too high tariff. There is such a thing as a too large number of manufacturers of certain lines, and to prevent such hasty growths, tariffs should be moderate and carefully adapted to the situation of the country, and of the particular trade which it is intended to benefit. Abrupt and extensive changes should be avoided as being destructive.

But there can be no doubt that changes will be ultimately made in the United States tariff, and from some of these changes Canada expects to benefit. The agricultural classes will be the

first to derive benefit therefrom, but this benefit will permeate all branches of the country's trade. Still while some little benefit may be derived in this way, there will be no throwing down of tariff walls altogether. Many duties will be retained, and when cut down will, in many cases, be higher than the Canadian tariff of to-day. It is, nevertheless, instructive to watch this movement in the United States, because on that movement depends to a great extent the course that shall be pursued by tariff reformers in Canada.

## THE WOOL TRADE.

FOREIGN wool is in very little demand in Canada at present. Last month large quantities of Cape wool were offered by American houses, but the sale was slow. Too slow for the Americans, who were forced to ship to England in order to realize quickly. Small lots of Cape wool have been sold on the Toronto and Montreal markets to meet present requirements. The prices ruling have been 13, 14 and 15 cents. The buyer who secured quantities at 13 was quite lucky.

A large number of wooled sheepskins have been shipped into Canada during the past two months. The imports would amount to about 50,000 skins. At this season it is usual for Canadians to be exporting these. The consequence has been that prices instead of ruling as usual from 75 cents to a dollar, ran between 25 and 45 cents.

Ontario buyers of fleece wool are holding on for better prices, as the large dealers will offer no more than 17 cents, and this is less than was paid for it.

Some of the mills have bought Northwest wool at 15 cents for selections, and running down as low as 11 cents for very inferior grades.

A London despatch of September 27th says: "At the wool sales to-day 4,000 bales of fair quality were offered. The bidding was animated. Home purchasers bought with great freedom. French and German buyers purchased actively. The market was firm. Following are the sales and the prices obtained for greasies: New South Wales, 1,000 bales; greasy, 5¾d. to 9½d. Queensland, 200 bales; greasy, 5¾d. to 6d. Victoria, 300 bales; greasy, 9½ to 10½d. South Australia, 500 bales; greasy, 5d. to 7½d. West Australia, 200 bales; greasy, 4¼d. to 5¼d. Tasmania, 100 bales; greasy, 7¾d. to 10d. New Zealand, 1,000 bales; greasy, 5¼d. to 11d. Cape of Good Hope and Natal, 700 bales; greasy, 5¼d. to 6¾d.

## AN ELECTRIC CUTTING MACHINE.

ON Friday, October 13th, there was exhibited at the warehouse of W. R. Johnston & Co. an electric cutting machine, specially designed for the use of the wholesale clothing and shirt trades. This machine is about 14 inches in height and consists of a frame in which is set a small motor, two or three cog wheels and a revolving circular knife, a base specially adapted for running over a cutting table, and a handle by which the operator pushes the machine. The electricity is supplied by means of a slack wire hung from the ceiling in such a way that the machine can be run all over the table while the current is turned on. The revolving knife is equal to the task of cutting 100 ply of cotton at a time, or from 2¼ to 3 inches of heavy cloth. It will do the work of eight expert cutters.

This wonderful machine was shown under the control of Captain Alexander Hamilton Gunn, a Scotch capitalist, whose name is familiar to those who have anything to do with ocean steamers. Mr. Gunn is the man who is backing the machine