

THE CANADIAN FARMER, THE GENERAL CONSUMER AND THE WOOLEN TARIFF.

Early History.

The history of the wool industry of Canada and the United States is very interesting, not only as a story of the achievements of modern inventive skill in providing for the creature comforts of the people, but as an illustration of the effect of tariff laws in developing or retarding a nation's industrial independence.

The aim of this pamphlet will be to show how the Canadian farmer, as well as the general consumer, is affected by the growth or decay of a native woolen industry.

Because of the common tendency to justify or condemn the attitude of one political party or the other on tariff questions this problem has become confused and clouded where it ought to be clear. The writer hopes that a brief history of the wool industry as it affects Canada and a presentation of the foundation facts in the present situation will help to clear away the fog.

If the trade relations of the great nations of the world were ideal, commerce between them would be unrestricted and imports and exports would be absolutely free. In that case each Government would have to raise its revenues by direct taxation, which would be a good thing in itself, because the people of each nation would have a keener interest in securing economy and honest administration in its own Government. But, with one exception, all the great nations raise their revenues by taxes on imports. Even Great Britain, though called a free trade country, has a considerable list of articles which cannot be imported without paying a tax. Canada, ever since it became a self-governing country, has raised more or less of its revenues by imposing duties on various imports, and from the time of Confederation to the present moment no political party has attempted to make our imports free and raise our revenues by direct taxation.