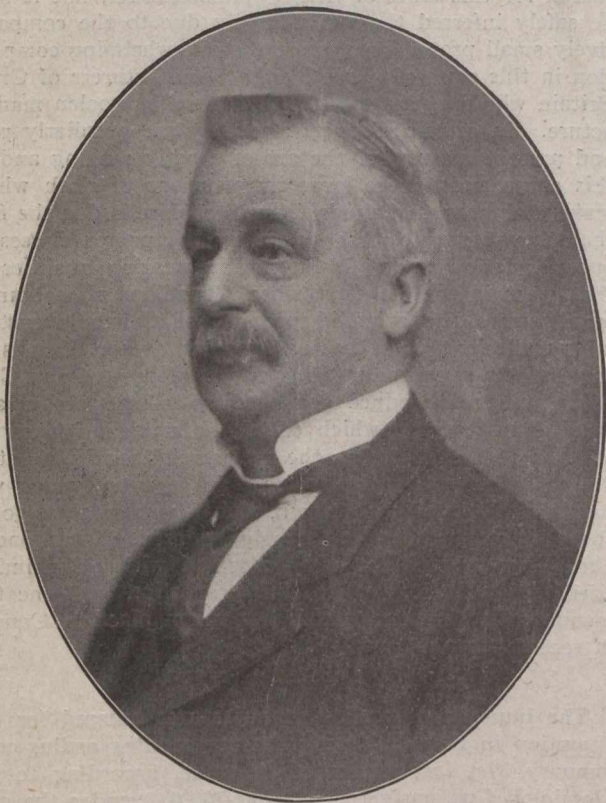


industries combined, and a peculiar feature is that the worsted branch, one of the most important, was built up mainly upon Canadian wool.

Among all peoples, and not only those who have attained to a considerable measure of industrial success, the underlying idea would appear to be in the direction of economic independence in such an important matter as the provision of suitable clothing for their own needs. In the event of war, dependence upon countries abroad for a people's clothing necessities becomes an absurdity with possibilities of disaster in the near background—only equalled by those attending similar conditions in respect to its supplies of food. It was largely this feeling which has been at the bottom of so many legislative interferences with the course of the textile industry; from the enactments of Edward I. and Edward III. in England down to the protective policies of the United States and other countries: The desire to foster native industry and make each country self-supporting.



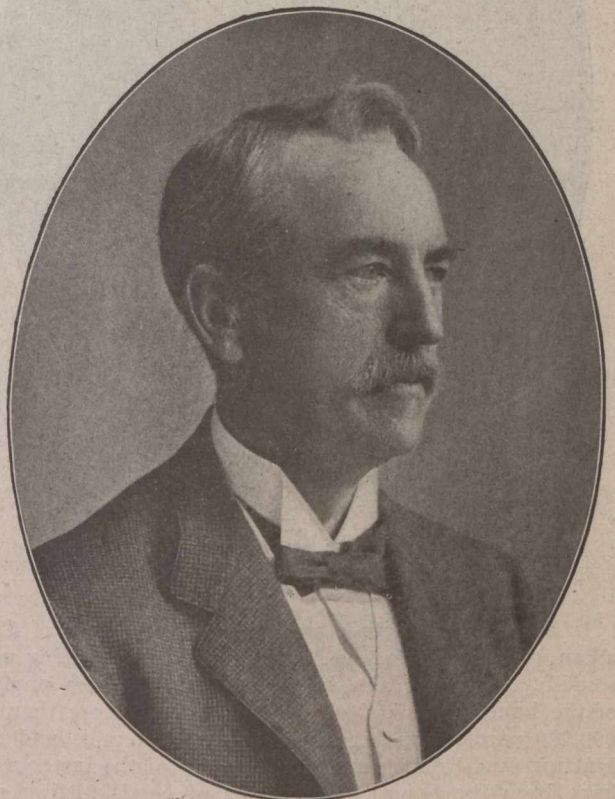
WM. THORBURN, M.P.,
Thorburn Woollen Mills, Almoute.

It is not surprising that, in Canada as elsewhere, each branch of the industry has developed best in the section in which experience, natural conditions, and perhaps some early impetus of a fortuitous character have shown to be best adapted to the purpose. For instance, the greatest proportion of Canada's cotton mills are located in Quebec province, with its advantage in the possession of a class of people from whom operatives well adapted to this class of industry can be obtained most readily. The Woollen Mills are situated largely in Eastern Ontario, and to some extent in Nova Scotia, which sections produce a very fine quality of wool. Knitting mills are scattered promiscuously throughout the breadth of Central and Eastern Canada but largely in Ontario and Quebec.

We referred to the beginning of this article to the inter-dependence of the textile and agricultural industries, in view of the fact, of course, that the products of the one are the raw materials of the other. This close connection with the soil, with the art, or industry; which in the last analysis is really the base of all others, makes for the strength of the former. In Canada, the two branches of textiles which have attained to really large proportions are the woollen and cotton manufactures, of which the

raw material for the former is the only one native to the country. We will, therefore, begin with a brief history and description of the Canadian woollen industry, and its allied branch of agriculture, the rearing of sheep.

The needs of the early French Colonists of Canada were provided mainly by European manufacturers, who it must be confessed appear to have looked upon the colonies as existing chiefly for their own profit. But owing to the high prices extorted by the latter, the settlers took first to smuggling and then to making clothing for themselves. Sometimes this was frowned upon by the home authorities and sometimes looked on with equanimity. Intendant Talon of Quebec, for instance, was one of the latter, for in 1671 we find he stated that he had caused druggets, coarse camlet, bolting cloth, serge and woollens to be made in the colony, and he boasted "I have of Canadian make wherewithal to clothe myself from head to foot". The Ursuline Nuns of Quebec taught girls to spin and weave, and the spinning wheel and loom became a part of the furniture in every French Canadian home and wives and daughters provided every fabric needed, from the clothes worn by the men and women, to the towels used in the kitchen, the carpeting on the floor and the bed-clothing which kept them warm at night. Sheep raising and flax and hemp culture advanced hand in hand with spinning and weaving and by the close of the eighteenth century, practically all the wool grown in the British American colonies was spun into yarn and woven into cloth by the colonists themselves. This refers not only to Quebec but to Nova Scotia, for we find, in a letter written by Lieutenant Governor Francklin to London that "the country people work up the wool for their own use into stockings and a stuff called homespun, what little their sheep produce and they also make a part or their coarse linen from the flax they produce."



T. B. CALDWELL,
Clyde and Mississippi Mills, Lanark.

The Canadian woollen industry continued to develop as a household occupation well into the nineteenth century, when power machines were introduced into the carding and fulling departments. In 1850 there were in existence about 400 custom carding and fulling mills and 250 machine weaving factories, besides about 60,000 handlooms, turning out 6,000,000 yds. of an admirable quality of homespun cloth and flannel.