

seldom considered, is the condition of the yards in villages and small towns where wood fuel being so generally used causes masses of chips to be strewn around. The common use of coal oil lamps is another prolific source of danger. Another danger is the small boy's love of a fire, which, with a few choice companions, he lights for fun by piling dry leaves and setting them ablaze near to wooden fences. It would pay such small communities to have one or two men always on hand in charge of the engine, who, in case of fire, could instantly get up steam, or prepare for the men when collected getting promptly to work.

IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRIES.

THEIR IMPORTANCE AND THE NECESSITY FOR THEIR BEING SUPPORTED IN THE INTERESTS OF CANADA.

The Finance Minister is not reported to have made any further allusion to the policy of the Government in regard to the iron and steel enterprises of the Dominion than what appears in the resolution which he introduced as follows:—

"That the following sections be added to the customs tariff, 1897: The Governor in Council may, by order in Council, direct that a duty of seven dollars per ton shall be imposed in schedule A on all iron and steel railway bars, or rails in any form for railways, imported into Canada, and from and after the publication of such order in "The Canada Gazette," such duties shall be levied, collected and paid on all such rails, and thereafter item 238 in schedule A and item 585 in schedule B shall be repealed. Provided, however, that such order shall not be passed until the Governor in Council is satisfied that steel rails of the best quality, suitable for the use of Canadian railways, are being manufactured in Canada, from steel made in Canada, in sufficient quantity to meet the ordinary requirements of the market."

This resolution is an extension of the policy embodied on the several Acts that have been passed relative to bounties on the production of iron and steel. These were, first, an Act passed in 1894 authorizing a bounty of \$2 on Canadian pig iron, puddled bars and steel billets. In 1897 an Act was passed by which this was repealed and the bounty (1) of \$3 per ton was authorized on steel ingots manufactured from ingredients of which not less than 50 per cent. of their weight consists of pig-iron made in Canada; (2) a bounty of \$3 per ton on puddled iron bars made from Canadian made pig-iron; (3) a bounty on pig-iron manufactured from ore of \$3 per ton on the proportion produced from Canadian ore and \$2 on the proportion produced from foreign ore. By an Act of 1898 these provisions, as above stated, are to be held as having come into

force on 23rd April, 1897. An Act of 1899 provides that, these bounties shall continue to be paid to 30th June, 1907, at a yearly diminishing rate from 1902; 90 per cent. of the bounties to be paid in 1902-3; 75 per cent. in 1903-4; 55 per cent. in 1904-5; 35 per cent. in 1905-6, and 20 per cent. in 1906-7. In the year ended 30th June, 1902, these bounties on iron and steel amounted to \$791,089.

The policy on which these grants are based has been endorsed by the leaders of both political parties, it is, therefore, entirely outside the arena of party politics. Having been established as a national policy and pursued for several years, there is no need for defending this arrangement for developing the iron industries of Canada. There is, however, the question as to whether the real intentions of the Parliament and desires of the country at large are not in danger of being, to some extent, frustrated by the time limit set forth in above schedule being more restricted than was expected. It was anticipated that, the year 1902, which was fixed as the time when the bounties were to commence being lowered, would see the furnaces for making pig-iron, puddled iron bars and steel ingots in full activity, all complete and producing up to their maximum capacity as designed. This was not the case, for, as frequently happens, the construction of the furnaces and equipment of the works occupied a considerably longer time than was expected by the sanguine proprietors. Under such circumstances it would be strictly in accordance with the intention of the Legislature, as expressed in the Acts passed to encourage the development of iron and steel industries in Canada, were the time limit extended during which bounties should be paid, and the date for the commencement of the sliding scale advanced from 1902 to 1904, so that up to 1904 the full bounties be paid, and in 1904-5 the bounties be reduced to 90 per cent. of those stated; 75 per cent. in 1905-6; 55 per cent. in 1906-7; 35 per cent. in 1907-8; and 20 per cent. in 1908-9. This, we believe, would be in harmony with the purposes of the Acts passed, would indeed be far more in accordance with the intentions of the Legislature and with the sentiment of the country than reducing the bounties before the iron and steel furnaces had entered upon their full capacities. The enormous benefits which in course of time Canada will derive from the iron and steel industries of this country can hardly be over-estimated. They will greatly enlarge the field for labour, they will increase the internal trade of the Dominion, they will give a stimulus and help to all other industries, of which iron and steel are the back-bone. No loftier aim can inspire legislative action than the development of the natural resources of the country, the providing a sphere for the enlargement of its industrial life, and giving to capital opportunities for profitable employment.