

A Popular Act

When the original Bill was under debate a year ago it had the good fortune to commend itself to Members on both sides of the House, in the Commons as well as in the Senate. Supported almost unanimously by the manufacturing jewellers as well as by the retail trade, it was also received with favor by the general public, who welcomed an opportunity of seeing for themselves the exact quality of the goods they were buying. Such was its popularity that it was made the subject of special commendation in the speech with which the Governor General closed the House.

Amendment Railroaded through Senate

Any change in a measure so universally approved of should be made only after the most careful consideration, and after consultation with all parties likely to be interested. Yet the Senate amendment was rushed through, in the face of protests from the Leader of the Government and the Leader of the Opposition. Interested manufacturers were given no opportunity of being heard, and when the subject under discussion was surrounded with so many technicalities, it is only fair that this should have been done. A year ago, when the bill was before the Committee of the Senate, the identical point covered in the present amendment came up for discussion. Argument was heard from both sides and the matter was thoroughly threshed out. The vote in favor of the 11 karat standard was almost unanimous. Why reverse their decision without consulting the framers of the legislation?

Summary

1. More than nine tenths of the jewelry trade in Canada is opposed to any lowering of our gold standard. Petitions to this effect have been presented to the House of Commons from representative dealers in Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton, London, Guelph, Belleville, Oshawa, Port Hope, Cobourg and other places.
2. Nine karat gold will tarnish. It looks cheap. Canada does not wish to be known as a poor man's country.
3. It is preposterous to forbid Canadians to manufacture an article which can be lawfully imported.
4. Canadian gold goods cannot be sold in England, but every variety of English gold goods except one can be sold in Canada.
5. English manufacturers admit they can meet the requirements of our present Act. It works them no injustice.
6. Even should Goldsmith's Hall refuse to allow a 11 karat Hall-mark, which is not at all likely, the Canadian dealer wishing to import can have his registered trade mark, as well as the other markings required by the Act, applied in the English factory.
7. The amendment would reduce the protection on low-grade gold goods by 7 1/2 per cent.