

closely resembling a monopoly, it is important to know how far the control of its tariff will be a matter of law or the right of control will continue to be vested in the legislature.

OUR WOOLLENS INDUSTRY.

The manufacture of woollen goods in Canada, which is now assuming important proportions, is mainly the growth of recent years. Up to about the year 1860, the products of Canadian woollen mills were far from showing either variety or great elegance. They were, for the most part, confined to linsey-woolsey, coarse flannels, and the material known as "Canada Grey." To sell a case of Canadian tweeds in those days required as much effort as would dispose of a train-load now. The Messrs. Barber of Streetsville, McKechnie of Cobourg, McKinnon of Caledonia, Hunt and Elliot of Preston, and Lomas of Sherbrooke, were among the then prominent makers. They turned out only plain goods, substantial and of sound value. For any fine trouserings or "nobby" pattern tweeds, the swells of those days and their tailors looked to Britain.

About the close of the American war, however, our woollens trade seemed to take a fresh start. A number of mills of an improved description were built from 1865 to 1869, the manufacture of a higher class of fabrics was attempted, and the home made began to take the place of the imported article for ordinary wear. People were at first shy of the new product, but gradually began to find there was good wear in it. Allowing for some defects at first in color and in finish, its substance and durability were unquestionable, and it grew in favor. Like all new enterprises, this one had to go through its experimental stage; and in establishing their new enterprise, manufacturers had to learn, and indeed to unlearn, many things. It is not surprising, therefore, that a good deal was lost, in both time and money, by the earlier makers of fine woollen goods in Canada.

Mr. George Stephen, of Montreal, was among the first to perceive the opening for this important industry, and he engaged in it with characteristic enterprise and thoroughness. Practical men, such as Mr. Rosamond, who from Waterloo County went to Almonte, and Mr. Paton of Sherbrooke, exerted themselves in the work with skill and persistence, and in spite of many discouragements and temporary drawbacks—believing in the future of the trade—their perseverance has been rewarded with a success which is worthy of the efforts made. The products of Sherbrooke and of Almonte not only command approval and extensive use

by the people of the Dominion, but have received the highest encomiums when exhibited in competition with the world at the Centennial Exhibition and in Paris, and they are sold in Victoria and in New South Wales. The last ten or fifteen years have witnessed a remarkable extension of what was for a time a struggling industry. Mills at Peterboro, Galt, Perth and Valleyfield were established for the manufacture of Canadian tweeds. These were followed by the erection of factories at Guelph, St. Hyacinthe and Newcastle, for flannels; at Cornwall and St. Hyacinthe for blankets; at various points for yarns; at Paris, Strathroy, Coaticook, Montreal and Toronto, for knitted underwear; while the mills at Almonte, Smith's Falls, Galt and Guelph, for hosiery, Cardigan jackets, woven caps, and nubias, among the latest achievements in this line, were doubtless largely fostered by, if they were not the distinct result of, the protective tariff of the present Government. Although the material used in these goods is much more largely Cape and Australian than Canadian wool, still a decided stimulus has of late years been given to the growth of home wool as well as to its price. The successful development of the woollen manufacture in Ontario and Quebec, appears to have been not without its effect in the Maritime Provinces. While a considerable market has been found there, for the products of the two provinces first named, Nova Scotia has begun to send westward her distinctive make, known as *etoffe du pays*, or Halifax cloth.

We have been at some pains during a few months past, to ascertain what may be the extent of woollen manufacture in the Dominion, and by means of circulars to the mills, and enquiries of their agents and of the wholesale trade, to arrive at an estimate of the present number of mills, and the description and value of their product. We give to-day the result of our inquiries in part, and shall return to the subject in a future issue.

The annual product of the 79 mills, for which we have estimates, is about \$4,250,000. The other mills on this Ontario list will turn out perhaps \$700,000 worth of goods. The Quebec mills named turn out annually close upon \$200,000 worth, making the total output for both provinces in the vicinity of seven million dollars. The custom mills and smaller factories we shall deal with shortly.

THE GAS USED IN TORONTO.

A special committee of the City Council reports strongly against the quality of gas supplied by the Consumers' Company, in Toronto. "Water gas," the report says,

such as is furnished to the city, "is produced by passing steam over and through anthracite coal, with an admixture of crude coal oil, and as the steam is decomposed by the ignited carbon, the hydrogen is set free, and carbonic oxide is produced to a most dangerous extent." Water gas, made by the "Strong" process, we would remark, is not necessarily made of anthracite coal: it can be made from any kind of coal. Petroleum, there is no doubt, is an objectionable ingredient.

This kind of gas can be made at very trifling cost. Steam is used, for one reason, because the whole of water is combustible and only the gaseous parts of coal are. The water gas is perhaps less adapted for illuminating than for heating purposes; it is, in the opinion of some good judges, the fuel of the future, and if applied to that purpose, an immense economy would be effected.

The report, instead of giving an analysis of the Toronto company's gas, gives an analysis of gas furnished by the Municipal Gas Co. of New York, last summer. This, we need not say, is not scientific. There is nothing to show that the two kinds of gas are identical. The Toronto company has a right to be tried by its own gas, which is probably bad enough. In the New York sample, the analysis shows 26.18 of carbonic oxide, while ordinary coal gas is said to contain only 4.167 of that poisonous ingredient.

The report states that the use of water gas has been prohibited in many places, on account of its poisonous qualities; and whatever may be the fact, the statement shows that there is room for further inquiry. The number of deaths which have occurred from the gas escape of late is put down to the excessive quantity of carbonic oxide which the gas contains. We should say that this gas is very dangerous when used as a night light; for when the burners fur up it is peculiarly liable to go out. The committee does not believe that lava tips have anything to do with the filling up of burners; and it argues, not very conclusively we think, on the company's proposal to change five foot for three foot burners, that the cost to consumers would be raised in the proportion of 25 to 15, without getting any more gas. But surely this result would happen only if more gas passed the meter and was burnt; it is because the gas cannot pass through the burners that there is so little light got.

The company can hardly longer pretend that "the experiment" they are engaged in has not failed. They may as well remedy the evil without compulsion as with it, for the public will not tolerate what they regard as the imposition now being practiced upon it.