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IRON MANUFACTURING IN CANADA.

An important announcement was made a few days ago in the notice of resolution which the Honorable Mr. Fielding gave in the House of Commons providing for the gradual reduction of the bounties on steel ingots, puddled iron bars and pig iron manufactured in Canada.

It will be remembered that in 1897 it was enacted that the following bounties should be paid: $3 per ton on steel ingots made from ingredients of which not less than fifty per cent. of their weight consists of pig iron made in Canada, (2) $3 per ton on puddled iron bars made from Canadian pig-iron, (3) $3 per ton on pig-iron made from Canadian ore, and $2 per ton on pig iron made from foreign ore. This Act was to remain in force until 1902.

Our esteemed contemporary, the Monetary Times, undertakes to analyse the iron manufacturing industry of Canada, and gives us some information concerning it as follows: —

Capital has within the past two or three years become interested in Canadian iron manufacturing. Several plants for the production of iron and steel have been established in Ontario. In the Maritime Provinces the Nova Scotia Steel Company has been a large producer. During 1898 this company produced at the works at Ferrona and New Glasgow, 21,627 tons of pig iron, 23,541 tons of steel and 2,276 tons of forgings, in the manufacturing of which they consumed 107,000 tons of coal, 19,000 tons of native ore, 15,000 tons of Newfoundland ore, 6,000 tons of Spanish or Cuban ore, 32,000 tons of coke and 18,000 tons of limestone.

Other ventures are contemplated and from those who are investing capital in the industry has come a request for information as to the probable duration of the bounties. Mr. Fielding now states that the bounties will be abolished by June 30, 1907. Reduction in the amount of them will commence on the 23rd of April, 1902. From this date until June 30, 1903, the bounty will be only ninety per cent. of what it is at present. From July 1, 1903, to June 30, 1904, the bounty will be seventy-five per cent. of the present figures. From July 1, 1904, until June 30, 1905, the bounty will be fifty-five per cent. For the following year the bounty will be thirty-five per cent., and for the final year the bounty will be twenty per cent. It is provided that no bounty will be paid on steel ingots manufactured from puddled iron produced in Canada.

The Monetary Times informs us that the assistance which these bounties gives is to an infant (?) industry, and thinks that if the industry is not sturdy enough to thrive under these bounties the only conclusion to be drawn is that conditions in Canada are not suited to iron manufacturing. It has confidence, however, that this is not the case, and it is kind enough to believe that within the next few years the iron industry will grow in importance.

It is exceedingly kind of our neighbor to entertain such pleasant anticipations regarding an infant (!) industry the beginning of which was signalized when Champlain was a living character in this country. It shows ignorance of the history of the industry, and of Canada also, but it is excusable. We are happy to learn, too, that the Monetary Times really believes that within the next few years the iron industry will grow in importance.

Mr. James M. Swank, in his just published report to the American Iron and Steel Association, of which he is General Manager, and who is an unchallenged authority in such matters, devotes space to giving the statistics of the Canadian iron trade for 1898, in which he tells of the growth of the industry. He tells us that the production of pig iron in Canada in 1894 amounted to 44,791 gross tons.

In 1895 the production amounted to 37,875 tons, in 1896 to 60,030 tons, and in 1897 to 53,796 tons. In 1898 the production amounted to 68,755 tons, of which about one-eleventh was charcoal iron, the remainder being coke iron. The production of Bessemer pig iron in 1898, included in the figures given above, was 10,200 tons, and the production of basic pig iron was 9,100 tons, all made by one company. The total production of pig iron in 1898 as compared with that of 1897 shows an increase of 14,959 tons. The consumption of limestone by the Canadian furnaces in 1898 amounted to 30,302 tons, against 27,957 tons in 1897.

On December 31, 1898, the unsold stocks of pig iron in Canada which were in the hands of the manufacturers or their agents amounted to 9,979 tons, as compared with 20,265 tons on December 31, 1897, 29,320 tons on December 31, 1896, and 17,800 tons on December 31, 1895. Of the unsold pig iron on hand on December 31, 1898, about four-fifths was charcoal pig iron, the remainder being coke iron.

Canada did not produce any spiegeleisen or ferro-manganese in 1897 or 1898, although some time ago the Mineral Products Company, of Hillsboro, New Brunswick, leased the Bridgeville Furnace, at Bridgeville, Nova Scotia, for this purpose and expected to have the furnace in operation in 1898. The company now hopes to blow in the furnace some time in May. The ferro-manganese will be made from briquettes of manganese ore. The annual capacity of the furnace is about 7,300 gross tons.

On December 31, 1898, there were nine completed blast furnaces in the Dominion, and of this number three were in blast and six were out of blast on the date named. On December 31, 1897, there were eight completed furnaces, of which four were in blast and four were idle. In the spring of 1898 the Deseronto Iron Company, Limited, began building a charcoal furnace at Deseronto, in the Province of Ontario, which it completed in December. The furnace was blown in on January 25, 1899. It is now making about 1,000 tons of pig iron per month from Lake Superior ores.

The production of crude steel, steel castings, and all kinds of iron and steel rolled into finished forms in Canada in 1898