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EDITORIAL.

An Exotic Industry.

A year or so ago strong protest was raised among users of tinware by a report that a company promoted to manufacture at Morrisburg, Ont., the raw material from which tinware is made was seeking to induce the Dominion Government to place a duty on tin plate, in order to afford protection to this new manufacturing industry which it was proposed to launch in Canada. The request for a duty was effectually checkmated at the time by force of public opinion, and was also viewed with disfavor by Hon. Mr. Fielding, the Minister of Finance, who took the position that such a duty would impose on the general public a burden out of proportion to the prospective benefit that would accrue from the establishment of the industry. The company asking for the concession is said to have been organized by a business promoter, who, we understand, has since dissociated himself from the enterprise. The company, which has been carrying on the business in a desultory manner, has lately gone into the hands of liquidators, though it has been given to understand that a new company was being formed, called the Canadian Sheet-steel Corporation. Closely following this announcement, came an Ottawa despatch stating that another attempt was being put forth to secure the imposition of a duty on tin plate, galvanized plate and black plate. It was admitted that protection against American competition was already afforded by the anti-dumping clauses of the Tariff Act, but the way was left open for free imports of plate from Britain and Europe. According to the despatch, the would-be beneficiaries desired the imposition of a general duty, along with the extra protection already enjoyed, as against the American product.

Before granting their request, the Government should candidly consider two questions:

1. Is it likely that, with the aid of a tariff, a flourishing business in tin-plate manufacture could be established in Canada?

2. Is it worth what it would cost?

In considering the first question, we must bear in mind that tin plate is manufactured in hundreds of different sizes, thicknesses and qualities. In order that the process may be accomplished at a minimum expense, it is necessary to have an immense output. At present, a large proportion of the world's tin plate is manufactured in Wales, the tin being obtained conveniently in Cornwall, and, also, if we are correctly informed, from the Straits Settlements. A Canadian plant, even though monopolizing the Canadian demand, and supplied with equally cheap raw material, could not reasonably expect to turn out plate at as low a price as the Welsh mills. For the fiscal year ending March 31st, 1908, Canada's imports of tinware and all manufactures of tin amounted to only \$256,638; imports of tin in blocks, pigs or bars, 34,571 cwt., worth \$1,282,004; tin plates and sheets, 697,514 cwt., worth \$2,437,510; tin-foil amounting to \$79,897, and tin-strip waste, \$308,00. Of the tin plate, two-thirds came from Britain.

The general reader should perhaps be informed that blocks, pigs and bars are the ingot form in which the pure metal arrives. Tin plate is simply a sheet of steel coated with a relatively thin surfacing of tin. Galvanized plate is the steel foundation similarly coated with zinc. To return to the point, however, it must be clear that a Canadian tin-plate or galvanizing industry would be handicapped in trying to satisfy the

limited demands of our trade with a full assortment of product.

In respect to raw material, the Ontario plant is not well situated. This would consist largely of steel and tin, with coal, also, required for the purpose of manufacture. There is not one prominent tin mine in North America, if, indeed, there is any at all. The world's production of tin in 1906 was over 96,000 long tons, derived from mines in Cornwall, Eng.; Straits Settlements; Dutch East Indies, Bolivia, South America and Australia. The United States tin-plate industry, fostered originally by a 100-per-cent. protective tariff, and still highly protected, is centered largely around Pittsburg, the center of the coal, iron and steel industries, and, we believe, imports tin largely from England.

The Morrisburg plant would have to assemble not only its tin, but its steel plate, this probably from Nova Scotia or Algoma, while coal would be drawn, doubtless, from Pennsylvania. With the necessity of assembling raw material from Cornwall, Nova Scotia and Pennsylvania, it requires a long stretch of imagination to conceive opportunity for economical manufacture of this product in Eastern Ontario. A prominent captain of industry, asked by "The Farmer's Advocate" whether he thought the business could be made to pay, even with a 30-per-cent. duty, significantly replied that "he wouldn't want any money in it."

Obviously, therefore, a duty on tin plate would increase the cost of it to manufacturers of tinware, temporarily at least, and permanently in all probability. This would assuredly advance the price of tinware. The increase would be relatively greatest in those lines such as cans for vegetable and fish-canning purposes, and relatively less in the case of pails and household utensils. A manufacturer of the latter thought a 30-per-cent. tariff on tin plate might increase the cost of tin pails by 10 per cent, and of canning-factory tinware by a considerably greater percentage. To the canning business this would be a serious handicap. Immense quantities of tin plate go annually to British Columbia, while a can factory in Hamilton, Ont., also uses from a hundred and fifty to two hundred thousand 150-pound boxes a year.

Thus, we see that not only would a duty on block and plate tin affect every household and every dairy, but it would be a specially heavy tax on the large, important and growing business of canning fish, fruits and vegetables.

As between the great good of the many, and the doubtful advantage of the few, the Government need not hesitate. Tin-plate manufacture in Ontario is an exotic industry which we would be ill-advised to encourage.

Demand for Alfalfa.

Inquiries at seedhouses reveal the fact that never was alfalfa seed in such demand in Canada. Farmers have learned that it is a profitable crop; stockmen and those in charge of horse barns appreciate its value for feeding purposes. In Western Canada the increasing popularity of alfalfa hay is shown by the fact that one of the large cartage concerns in Winnipeg have advertised for large quantities of it.

This increased demand for the product, and the consequent attempt on the part of agriculturists to meet that demand, is only what was to be expected. Missionary work in any line gradually spreads, and bears fruit according to its merit.

While a representative of "The Farmer's Advocate" was discussing the great number of inquiries for alfalfa seed with the manager of an

Ontario seedhouse, recently, the seedman remarked: "Yes, there is a great demand, and it's all a mistake." When pressed for grounds for making such statement, it was explained that a great many farmers just wasted so much money when they purchased alfalfa seed, as they put it on ground that gave little or no crop. Although claiming that alfalfa would not thrive generally over Ontario, the seedman admitted the failure was almost always due to the fact that ungenial soil conditions existed. He urged that, for the present, Canadian farmers should stand by red clover.

Points brought up by men who sell the seed are worthy of consideration. The supplies of each kind of seed available were not ascertained, but merchants of all kinds, as a rule, try to encourage the sale of the article that can be supplied most readily. Those who have had experience with common red clover and alfalfa know that where the former flourishes, little difficulty is experienced in getting a satisfactory stand of alfalfa. The latter is more exacting in its demands, and requires a deeper soil, thoroughly drained, and containing a high per cent. of lime, for best results. But, generally speaking, conditions of soil and preparation of seed-bed that give success with one, do not fail with the other. Prospective alfalfa-growers should be prepared to meet every argument that purports to turn attention from that crop. They should also take every possible precaution to guard against failure by selecting a deep and well-drained soil, making a well-pulverized seed-bed, sowing clean seed of strong vitality, inoculating where necessary, and giving the crop reasonable opportunity of making good. Alfalfa is not recommended as a substitute for red clover, which is, all things considered, the more profitable rotation crop, but a field or two of it may be grown on any stock or dairy farm, even where clover is sown every third year on that portion on which rotation is practiced.

Let Feeds be Sold on Analysis.

In bringing graphically before the Agricultural Committee of the House of Commons the need of a federal law to regulate the trade in concentrated commercial feeding stuffs, the Chemist of the Dominion Experimental Farms, Frank T. Shutt, has contributed a valuable service to the agricultural community. The subject has been agitated and resolved upon at six successive meetings of the Ontario Experimental Union, and at the last annual meeting a deputation was appointed to urge it upon the Dominion Government. "The Farmer's Advocate" has repeatedly endorsed the demand, which likewise finds hearty support among all well-informed feeders and students of the chemistry of feeds.

As matters stand at present, many more or less valuable by-products from starch and glucose factories, beet-sugar factories, breakfast-food manufactories, etc., as well as elevator screenings, may not be confidently recommended or purchased at full price, because of the wide variability in the composition of samples of any particular class. For instance, genuine gluten meal is a feed comparing fairly well with oil-cake meal in percentage of protein and feeding value, yet some samples of gluten meal carry as low as 12 per cent. of protein, instead of 30 to 35 per cent., as it should possess. Now, when a farmer buys for \$25 to \$28 a ton a supply of what purports to be gluten meal, but which, instead of containing as much protein as oil cake, has barely as much as bran, he is scarcely likely to obtain profitable results, and the final effect is to prevent him from investing in such an uncertain product. It is too much like buying a cat in a bag. Thus, the manufac-