

MORE PROTECTION NEEDED.

A LAW has been in existence in Great Britain for some years requiring that certain manufactured articles imported from foreign countries shall be branded or marked with words showing the country of their origin. A similar law has recently been passed by the American Congress, but there is no such law in Canada. A recent investigation in England disclosed the fact that many of the swords and sabres in use in the British army were manufactured in Germany, although when the contract for them was made it was understood that they would be forged in British workshops. The fact is, German manufacturers can produce such goods much cheaper than British manufacturers, and the British law alluded to was passed to afford some measure of protection to British industries.

In the United States it was found that many lines of popular American-made goods—popular because of their superior excellence—were being closely imitated by British and other foreign manufacturers, the imitation extending even to the counterfeiting of the names and trade-marks of the American makers; and the demoralizing and ruinous effects these spurious imitations were creating in the American market induced Congress to enact the law alluded to.

As we have stated, no such law exists in Canada, although its necessity is apparent. It is necessary not only to protect Canadian manufacturers against the importations of spurious and inferior imitations of their products, but it is necessary also to protect Canadian consumers against having spurious cheap goods palmed off on them as genuine, and for which they pay the prices prevailing for the better articles. If such a law is necessary in Britain to protect the public against the spurious imitations of Germany; and if such a law is necessary in the United States for the same purpose, it is certainly much more necessary in Canada. Canada is not exempt from this imposition. Some of the shippers engaged in sending spurious and spuriously marked merchandise to this country are men of high standing, and it would be supposed that their respectability would have deterred them from engaging in such disreputable business. But that it does not is evident from a communication published in a late issue of the *Textile Mercury*, of Manchester, Eng., from the well known house of Messrs. Thos. Meadows & Co., of Liverpool, in which they say:—

"Goods entering the United States of America after March 1st next, are required, under the McKinley Act, to be branded with words showing the country of their origin, but by a Treasury Minute issued at Washington, January 28, 1891, and signed by Mr. Windom, it is decided that goods for Canada do not require to be marked, and as all goods for that country must at this season of the year pass through the States, we shall esteem it a favor if you will make this known in the columns of your paper. The terms of the Minute are as follows:—'Goods which arrive in the United States on and after March 1, 1891, and appear by the bills of lading and other documents to be merely intended for transit to Mexico or other foreign country, the same not being importations within the meaning of the statute, do not come within the scope of section 6 as to marking, stamping, branding, etc.'"

Of course the object of Messrs. Thos. Meadows & Co. in publishing the fact that goods coming to Canada are not required to conform to any law identifying them as to their

origin, is to notify manufacturers and shippers that although they cannot thus impose on the American market, they can with impunity impose on the Canadian market.

All Canadian consumers; all Canadian manufacturers and all honest Canadian importers are interested in demanding that the next Dominion Parliament make a law for their protection similar to those now in force in Great Britain and the United States.

AS TO PIG IRON.

IN another part of this issue is reproduced the essential parts of a paper recently read by Mr. W. H. Merritt, F. G. S., before the Geological and Mining Section of the Canadian Institute in this city. In this paper Mr. Merritt argues that if the production of pig iron in Canada, on a scale commensurate with the demands of the country is to be desired, it must be under a tariff protection high enough to ensure it. Of course this is the position this journal has persistently held to, and we are glad to have the co-operation of so valuable an ally as this gentleman.

Alluding to this paper *The Week* has this to say:

"The conclusion to which Mr. Merritt's argument leads is that Canada should adopt a policy which says, 'We are going to smelt our own iron and steel,' this policy being, of course, one of protection to whatever extent may be necessary to keep out importations. That the paper establishes this conclusion we hesitate to affirm, notwithstanding its merits. Two difficulties at once suggest themselves. The one arises out of the peculiar geographical features of Canada, and the magnificent distances over which the weighty product would have to be carried, when manufactured, in order to supply the whole market; the other, closely connected, relates to the enormous increase of cost of an article of daily and universal use and necessity, which would almost surely result, for a time at least. Would it be fair that all the farmers and other citizens of the whole Dominion should be so heavily taxed in order that even a large number of men should find employment in a new industry, and a-half dozen or so of them perhaps be enriched by it? Would the users of iron and steel submit to such an impost or should they be asked to do so?"

We do not think these objections amount to unsurmountable or even serious difficulties. As far as the Maritime Provinces are concerned, the question is fairly answered in the fact that pig iron is now being made in Nova Scotia; and what is now being done on a comparatively small scale may to equal or better advantage be done on a scale sufficiently large to meet the demands of those provinces, and probably also of Quebec, or a considerable portion of it. These parts of Canada can be reached more readily from Nova Scotia than from any portion of the United States where pig iron is made. So, too, as regards Ontario and the Western part of Quebec. As this journal has frequently shown, there are immense deposits of iron ore lying between Lake Ontario, Georgian Bay and the Ottawa river, and also north of that river in Quebec, which can be mined very cheaply; and as Mr. Merritt shows, charcoal for smelting purposes can be had in abundance. Indeed the facilities for making charcoal are so great that large quantities of the article are now being shipped to American iron furnaces. This region embraces a very large proportion of the iron consuming manufacturing industries of Canada, and of course iron made in this region could be delivered to these consumers with much greater facility than from any point in