

is the common size used, while in Canada the extra on 3" is never more than from 20¢ to 25 cents per keg, on account of the difference in the list. Taking into account the difference in the cost of manufacture, owing to the extra expense incurred in making small quantities, it cannot be said that the wire nail manufacturers have hitherto taken any undue advantage of the protection they enjoyed.

The proposed reduction of the duty on iron bridges and structural iron work to 30% *ad valorem*, from its former rate of 1¼ cents per pound, would have told heavily on Canadian bridge makers, in view of the fact that a considerable part of the material they use, such as beams, large angles, channels, etc., are not at present made in Canada. This has, however, been amended by making the duty 1 cent per pound, but not less than 30 per cent.

Boiler tubes, which are not made in Canada, have been reduced from 15 to 7½ per cent, while wrought iron pipe 2" and smaller, the bulk of which is made in Canada, has been reduced slightly. This is an industry which has made considerable strides during the past year or two. The quality of Canadian pipe was at first admittedly poor, but things are now changed in this respect, and Canadian pipe is generally placed on the same basis, in point of quality, with any imported material.

Iron and steel chains have been placed at 5 per cent. for all sizes over 5-16 diameter, a much needed change, for hitherto the rate was 5 per cent. on all sizes over 9-16" diameter, while smaller sizes were dutiable at 30 per cent, as manufactures of iron and steel not otherwise provided for. The ordinary short link coil chain is not made in this country, and the change of duty will be welcomed by lumber men especially, who use large quantities of chain in connection with their operations.

There is no doubt that under the changes originally proposed, many industries were placed in a very awkward position, as they were quite unable to compete with foreign goods. The abnormal depression in business in the United States has resulted in large quantities of goods being thrown on this market, at prices very much below their actual cost, and it would have been in the highest degree unjust to manufacturers who had invested large amounts in manufacturing in Canada, to find their capital suddenly useless, on account of this exceptional state of affairs. Canada has always been considered a sort of dumping ground for excess products from the United States, and this is one thing that must be kept in view in all legislation on tariff questions.

The changes made in Committee have been made mainly with a view to correct this state of affairs, and there is no doubt that when the Tariff Bill is reported to the House, it will be more generally acceptable to manufacturers and to all classes than it promised to be when first brought down.

Nova Scotia Strikes and Arbitration.

A brief reference to two coal strikes in Nova Scotia may interest students of social economy. A few short newspaper paragraphs told that the coal miners at the Joggins and at Springhill had come out on strike, and were followed by the announcement that all was amicably settled. The hardworked clerk or salesgirl doubtless wish they could improve their positions by a few days holiday and a refusal to work.

It is stated the miners struck work, and that shortly after masters and men met amicably under the aegis of the Secretary of the Provincial Workmen's Association and parted good friends, doubtless wondering what the trouble was about. Without wishing to decry the good services of the Association's Secretary, the question arises why could not the parties to the strife have met and settled their differences without requiring a third party, and what was the need of a strike at all?

The Statutes of Nova Scotia contain an Arbitration Act, but as yet no proceedings have been carried out under it. The formalities of procedure under an untried Act, and the delays incident to Statute law, are not palatable to parties who consider that they are in the right, and the report of the English Labor Commission is in this line, and their recommendations appear from the summaries made public to be unworkable to any form of compulsory arbitration. To no business of the present day does some form of amicable arbitration seem more essential than to coal mining. The varying conditions of roof, coal, etc., their hardness or softness, all present frequent changes in the wages the average miner earns. To his mind, intent on his daily toil, and anxious for no reduction of his reward, the broader questions of the selling price of coal, the costs of pumping, maintenance, etc., are not presented as they are to the mine manager. The mine owner has to get the best price he can for his product against competition in the market, and his price frequently leaves a non-dividend margin. Naturally he considers that he loses enough when his costs increase and his margin of profit diminishes on account of stone partings, etc., without having to pay an increased price for cutting the coal.

It is reported that the two strikes in question arose upon this and similar matters, not upon any general reduction in wages. The points of difference are those that should be settled from a standpoint of reason and mutual concession.

Admitting, as is reasonable, that the capital invested should receive a fair return, the surplus profit should be shared between the partners in the enterprise, the capital that provides and the labor that enriches. It is upon some basis such as this that the mutual interests of both must be best provided for. Attempts have been made in some districts to reach this by means of sliding scales; they are, however, more applicable in large districts having assured markets than in the small districts of Nova Scotia. Official machinery has been applied in some European

countries for the establishment of tribunals for dealing with wage questions, and they are found to work fairly well until a general depression or increase of price occurs, when drastic measures are appealed to. What power in the United States could compel the thousands of miners now on strike to resume work before they chose to, even if the fact were undeniable that they were offered the highest wage possible under the present conditions of trade?

The consideration of the question of a fair day's wage for a fair day's work can be arrived at only by both parties considering all the facts bearing on the price the consumer will pay. He buys in the cheapest market, and master and man must fight the cheapest producer or give up the struggle. For this reason the loss directly sustained in a strike by companies and men is often increased at a future date by a loss of market, and the joint interests demand that the laws of reason and common sense be invoked; that personal feelings and the British love of winning in a fight be subordinated to friendly discussion, amicable adjustment, and the stern fact that the world will buy the cheapest coal, regardless of masters' profits and workmen's wages.

Bloom, Billet and Slab.

One of our readers in the iron and steel trade writes: "If it were proposed to define the terms Bloom, Billet and Slab as such are now commercially known, would the following definitions be fairly accurate and expressive? The expression Bloom and Billet when applied to iron and steel means such unfinished material as intended to be re-rolled, the combined measurement of the width of the four sides of each being not less than fifteen inches and the length not exceeding sixty inches. The expression Slab, when applied to iron or steel, means such unfinished material as is intended to be re-rolled, the combined measurement of the width of the four sides of each being not less than fifteen inches and the thickness not less than one and one-half inches, the length to be not less than twelve nor greater than sixty inches. If in your opinion these definitions are not fairly accurate, would you be good enough to give us your ideas on the subject?" As the matter has some importance in view of tariff changes, we took the liberty of referring our correspondent's enquiry to Mr. C. Kirchoff, the editor of *The Iron Age*, New York, one of the foremost authorities on questions of this kind. Writing under date of 19th, Mr. Kirchoff advises: "In our opinion your definition of the expression Bloom and Billet is not comprehensive enough. Your definition would exclude from the classification of Billet all unfinished material intended to be re-rolled less than three and one-half inches square. Now, as a matter of fact, Billets are rolled from the initial heat down to one and one-half inches square. As a matter of fact, the dimensions of a Bloom or a Billet overlap and depend chiefly upon the character of the