



TARIFF AND TARIFF CHANGES.

A Reduction Necessary and Likely. Specific vs. Ad Valorem Duties. A Broader Classification. A Comparison of United States and Canadian Duties.

CANADIAN importers and retailers of dry goods have been remarkably and inexcusably slow in stating what changes they desire in the tariff; remarkably slow, because they are not usually slow at anything; inexcusably slow, because not only would the advice not be harmful, but it would be positively beneficial to the trade and helpful to the ministers of the Government on whom lies the task of regenerating the tariff. About May 1st, 1893, the dry goods men of Toronto and Montreal stated their views as to tariff remodelling in so far as it pertained to dry goods, but since then nothing has been done, beyond one or two formal resolutions from Boards of Trade. The manufacturers have been busy in trying to induce the Government to maintain the present schedules; the cotton men, the cuff and collar men, the woolen men and others have interviewed the committee and laid down their views amid a multitude of figures.

No dry goods dealer desires the duties entirely removed, and his desire would be unfulfilled for if he had such a one. A tariff is necessary, but it must be moderate and it must be scientific—more moderate and more scientific than it is at present. For this reason reductions may be expected this season and are absolutely necessary.

The first desirable change is the almost entire abolition of specific duties. When the dry goods men interviewed the ministers last May they advanced examples showing that on some cheap grades of woolens the duty was 130 per cent., while on expensive woolens it ran from 30 to 40 per cent. They showed that a mantle costing 5s. in England paid 67 per cent. duty, while one that cost 75s. paid only 26 per cent. Take the duty on colored cottons; everybody admits that the present duty of 15 per cent. and 2 cents per sq. yard is too high. An all-round ad valorem duty of 30 per cent. would be exceedingly ample, for both protective and revenue purposes. At the present rate, when the

Foreign cost in pence	per sq. yard	duty will be	per cent.
12	12	12	100
12	12	12	100
12	12	12	100
12	12	12	100
12	12	12	100
12	12	12	100
12	12	12	100
12	12	12	100
12	12	12	100
12	12	12	100

On many cheap lines of cottons the consumer would buy fifty per cent. cheaper had we no tariff, where 30 per cent. would be a sufficiently heavy tax. The tax of 65 per cent. may never be paid; but the tariff should not be so arranged that simple arithmetic will show that such a tax is within the bounds of possibility.

In the United States they have waged heavy war on the specific duties and have succeeded in doing away with them to a great extent. They press unfairly on the poor man, and although the arguments advanced in their favor are plausible, they are not practical. Let the people have the cheap grades

of goods if they want them and are willing to pay their hard-earned money for them. In the final tariff bill submitted by the United States Senate sub-committee to the Senate on March 3rd, we find the following change:

"Schedule 1, cotton manufactures, paragraphs 250 to 263, are all stricken out, and in place of the varying duties on cotton thread, yarns, spool thread, etc., therein imposed, which are some of them specific and some of them ad valorem, a uniform duty of 30 per cent. ad valorem is provided." This is an express denunciation of specific duties. Any one who has watched the changes in the U. S. tariff will agree that specific duties are considered unfair.

A BROADER CLASSIFICATION.

Another demand made last year by the dry goods men was a broader classification, with a uniform duty on each class. Then there would be no ambiguity, and all ports would be levying the same rates. It would obviate all embarrassing and harassing rulings and readings. The tariff has been made in pieces or sections and is not one harmonious whole. The classification desired is something like this:

- (1) All piece grey cottons, white cottons, denims, prints, etc.
- (2) All piece woolens, suitings, trouserings, overcoatings, mantle cloths, etc.
- (3) All dress fabrics, whether cotton, woolen or union.
- (4) All piece silk and ribbons.
- (5) All parasols and umbrellas.
- (6) All hosiery, gloves, underwear, etc.

This principle has also been adopted by the framers of the Wilson Bill, as the above quotation from the sub-committee's bill shows. Cotton goods are classified:

- (1) Printed Cotton Cloths.
- (2) Bleached Cotton Cloths.
- (3) Sized or Colored Cotton Cloths.
- (4) Manufactures of Cotton, N.E.S.

While the classification of the Wilson Bill is much simpler than that of the existing U. S. tariff; and the Canadian tariff should be much simpler still, as the advantages of it are obvious.

If there must be classification let there be no duty on raw materials, and let the duty increase according as the manufacture becomes more complete or elaborate. For example:

- (1) Cotton, raw—free.
- (2) Cotton, spun—10 per cent.
- (3) Cotton, spun and woven—15 per cent.
- (4) Cotton, spun, woven and bleached—20 per cent.
- (5) Cotton, spun, woven, bleached and dyed—25 per cent.

That is, the more work is done outside the country on the goods imported into the said country, the higher should be the