

**DIFFERENTIAL DUTIES.**

Montreal Gazette.

THE Ministers, it is understood, have promised to redress some of the shirt-makers' grievances by reducing the duty on the cloths they import, when cut up in the factories under Customs supervision. The cotton manufacturers are protesting against the arrangement. It is not a good arrangement, though in the late Conservative tariff there were several precedents for it, and though in the existing tariff it is not the only case of its kind. There is a decided element of injustice in giving a shirt-maker or a hatter an opportunity to import his materials at a rate below those which a merchant has to pay on like articles brought in for domestic consumption, or at a rate below that which another manufacturer has to pay. There is no just reason why a hatter should pay less taxes on his trimming material than is paid by a tailor using exactly the same goods. Carrying out the Government's reported intention will add another to the anomalies in a tariff that is already full of anomalies. The complaint of the shirt manufacturers was a perfectly just one. In its original changes of the tariff the Government left them in a position where they were discriminated against. The wrong course was taken to remedy the trouble. It is quite practicable to remove the cause of the shirt-makers' grievance without giving a cause of complaint to every cotton cloth consumer who is not a shirt maker.

**UNITED STATES FURS.**

The exports of American furs, obtained chiefly in Alaska, amount to \$4,000,000 in a year, and nearly 70 per cent. of them is sent to England. The importations of foreign furs or manufactured articles into which fur enters as the chief material amount in a year to \$10,000,000, or more than twice as much as the exports. The American trade in furs has been largely stimulated by the yields of Alaska. From 1870 to 1890 the Alaska Commercial Co. paid to the United States \$50,000 a year and \$2 for each seal taken for the sole privilege of taking seals in Alaska. The sealskins, in casks holding from 200 to 300 each, are shipped through San Francisco and New York to London. From 1868 to 1890 2,412,000 sealskins from Alaska were sold in London.

The average annual collection of furs on United States territory is as follows: Badger, 5,000 skins; bear, 15,000; beaver, 200,000; buffalo, of no account; fisher, 12,000; fox, all kinds, 150,000; marten, 130,000; mink, 250,000; muskrat, 3,000,000; opossum, 250,000; raccoon, 500,000; sea otter, 2,000; skunk, 550,000. In 1890 there were 484 fur establishments in the nation, of which 281 were in New York, and though there has been a decline in late years in the popularity of some fur garments in consequence of the mildness of the winter seasons, the business in American furs of the cheaper grade is on the increase, and a proof of this is found in the fact that while the exports of furs from this country were larger in 1896 than in the year preceding, the importation of fur goods declined.

**GREEK MERCHANTS IN MANCHESTER.**

Mr. Hazzopulo, the Greek vice-consul in Manchester, says a Manchester correspondent, has been speaking of the first settlement of the Greeks here. Previous to Navarino and other events by which the Turks were driven from Hellas, there had taken place a migration of Greek merchants to Trieste, Marseilles, London, Manchester and other centres. Constantine Iplidgki was one of the earlier settlers here, and is described as the founder of the Greek colony in the city. He arrived in the forties, and for a long time transacted a large yarn business. Mr. Hazzopulo came to Manchester in 1858, and is the head of the firm of S. Hazzopulo & Co., shipping largely to Constantinople and Bulgaria. The position of the Greek community in Manchester is not what it used to be, some

of its wealthiest members having left the city. The depression of trade and its wider distribution are set down as the causes of the exodus, the margin of profit being no longer large enough to attract fresh comers of the right sort. There are over fifty Greek merchant houses in the city, Messrs. Ralli Bros. being the principal.

It is no doubt true, not only of Greek, but of other foreign firms, that many of them have much smaller establishments than formerly. Where three or four gardeners were employed at the residence of the shipper, one now suffices, and other signs of economy are not wanting. The general trade of the city is, however, larger than was ever before known in its history, and such changes as those noted above are mere matters of detail affecting a class small in numbers.

**POOR QUALITY OF UNITED STATES FLAX.**

A MEMBER of the firm of Ewart & Son, Ltd., writes to a New York contemporary as follows: "We read in your valued paper of the 1st inst. that a large shipment of Minnesota flax was sent to Belfast last month, which naturally gave the impression that it was used there for the manufacture of linen and was therefore suitable for that purpose. As we are large users of flax and obtain it from all the best markets and have never been able to avail ourselves of American-grown flax, we enquired of our people in Belfast regarding this shipment and asked them to report to us. We are informed that the amount received was only one ton and the quality 'very inferior.' We would also like to mention in confirmation of this that since the 1st of May a representative of the Minnesota Flax Company has called upon us here with view to business, and he admitted that only two tons of flax had so far been shipped to Belfast—one ton to Messrs. Barbour and one ton to Messrs. John Preston & Co., flax dealers in Belfast.

"These facts do not lead us to expect much relief from the Minnesota flax-growing district, and we are inclined to believe that as yet there is practically no flax grown in that district suitable for the manufacture of linen goods, as was the case when in August last, in answer to a bona fide enquiry, the Minnesota Flax Co. stated that there was not any flax grown in that neighborhood which could be used in manufacturing linen.

"As the question of flax raising and the manufacturing of linen has been very much before the public lately these facts may be of interest to your readers."

**THE LACE NOVELTIES.**

Nottingham manufacturers are producing many novelties in fancy millinery laces. None of them, however, are able as yet to displace valenciennes, for which there is a large demand in edgings, laces, and insertions. In these goods there is a large variety of patterns in white, ivory, cream, grass lawn, and butter shades. A few are also sold with two-tone effects. Cotton and linen Maltese and torchon laces in white, ivory and butter are meeting with an increased inquiry. Oriental laces in white and butter are selling freely, but muslin ground combinations are not so much in request. Guipure laces and insertions in white, cream, and natural are in fair demand. There is only a moderate enquiry for crochet, American, and ordinary warp laces. Chantilly and other silk laces, edgings, and nets are selling in moderate quantities.—Drapers' Record.

**WHO FIGHT FOR BARGAINS.**

"It is the intense poverty of the people everywhere that presses them to clamor for the bargain counters," says a writer in The Houston (Tex.) Post. If this gentleman would come to New York and see our well-dressed and prosperous women fighting over 50c. shirt waists he would not imagine that the desire for bargains was altogether attributable to lack of the consumers' ability to spend money.—N. Y. Economist.