

IRISH HOMESPUNS.

Queen Victoria Responsible for the Present Day Demand for Them.

More than a dozen years ago the spinning wheels and looms of Donegal and Connemara, Ireland, had ceased to hum. But today they have revived for the kings and queens of Europe have decided that the peasants of those districts on the north and west of Ireland are fittest to manufacture court attire and the weavers are busy reaping a golden harvest.

The rejuvenation of these looms came in 1860 when Queen Victoria ordered a large quantity of Irish home made woollens. This immediately created an outside interest in the goods and a few weeks sufficed to set all the idle looms in motion. Orders are to-day being received from every city in Europe and numerous cities of this country. Under this wave of fashion the Irish peasants are prospering. The market for their goods, created by the order of England's late Queen, claims every yard they manufacture, so that while royalty flaunts homespuns the natives are content with the cheaper products of the mills.

For hundreds of years the peasants of Ireland clothed themselves in garments of their own manufacture. Less than fifty years ago no wedding was complete without a spinning wheel heading the list of presents from the parents of the bride. Machinery, however, was introduced and the old spinning wheels and looms were rapidly becoming things of the past. Had Queen Victoria delayed placing her royal order the hum of the spinning wheel and the rattle of the loom would not now be heard. When, however, the royal order came, old wheels were dusted up and renovated; fingers that had almost forgotten the duties required of them were quickened again by practice and young hands were rapidly trained.

Donegal is the centre of the present activity in homespun circles and the cottages along the mountainsides are always filled with busy weavers. Members of the family spin and weave during the winter months. When the days lengthen and the sun grows more genial, work on the little garden outside is begun. This necessitates a decrease in weaving. Then follows the merry hawking season, and no matter how much royalty may long for new homespuns, these folk take their time and enjoy life.

A cottage housing a loom may always be known by its unusual length. The loom fills an entire end of the abode, which is only one story in height. Additional floor space for the spinning wheels makes a greatly increased footage necessary and this is done at the expense of proportion, giving the cottage a squat appearance.

The machines used in the manufacture of the homespuns are amazingly crude in appearance but they are very serviceable and durable in spite of their lack of finished workmanship. Looms are handed down from generation to generation and the secret of the age of most of the spinning wheels and looms belongs to the workers of another period. All the machines are permeated with the odor of turf smoke and the natural color of the wool used in their construction has long since been dyed black by the burnt peat.

Yet it is astonishing with what accuracy these century old machines operate. Predictions have been made to the effect that the homespun industry will soon spread over the whole of Ireland. The lace and homespun industries of the country are closely allied. The peasants of the south have practically a monopoly of the lace business, while the homespun centres are in the north. Years ago large quantities of woollen fabrics were made near Belfast but the coming of the factories has ousted the cottage looms.

UTAH TO PROTECT SHEEP.

A Movement is on Foot to Prevent Injury by Careless Shearing.

A movement has been started in Utah and other sheep raising States to prevent all possible injury to sheep due to hasty or careless shearing. The Utah Wool Growers' Association is working in harmony with the State Humane Society in putting a stop to the cutting up of sheep by the shearers and in fining those guilty of flagrant carelessness. The shearers who violate the humane society are prosecuted by the society and inspectors will be stationed at the shearing corrals to make arrests where necessary.

The shearers' unions have also taken up the matter seriously and they will impose a fine on any member found guilty of willfully "cutting" sheep. The slight cuts due to the slipping of shears or machine clipper are, of course, unavoidable, the object of the movement outlined above being to put a stop to injuries to the sheep due to brutality or carelessness.

WOOL PECULIARLY OUR INDUSTRY

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shoddy consumed by woollen and worsted manufacturers was 68,000,000 pounds; in 1900 it was only 43,000,000 pounds; a decrease all the more significant when the growth of the industry is considered.

No people in the world are so exacting purchasers as the Americans. No people in the world have so much money on the average with which to buy. But the national trait of thriftiness is manifested nowhere more markedly than in the selection of clothing. No people in the world are so well paid. Nowhere else do the average plain people have so wide a range of choice of well made, skillfully designed, becoming, durable garments.

The first thing that new comers immigrants do on their arrival in this country is to discard the clothes which they have brought from the Old World in favor of attire made in the American fashion.

"READY TO WEAR" OUR SPECIALTY. Closely associated with the American wool manufacture is that great distinctive national industry, the making of ready to wear clothing, which of late years has enlisted some of the ablest administrative and technical skill in the United States. The representative clothing manufacturers of this country are men of enterprise and genius who have practically evolved a new industry in the last twenty or thirty years. They have established a plain people have so wide a range of choice of well made, skillfully designed, becoming, durable garments.

The sharpest kind of competition prevails in the manufacture of clothing and the same is true of the manufacture of cloth. Of the 120 woolen manufacturing establishments more than 90 are devoted to the making of woollen and worsted fabrics for personal wear and use. Thirty-four of these mills, some of them large and some small, are included in the American Woolen Company, which therefore has almost 900 independent American competitors. The American Woolen Company does about one-ninth of the woollen and worsted manufacturing business of the United States. Its capital stock of \$20,000,000 is about one-seventh of the total capital invested in the industry. There were by the latest Federal enumeration 69,541 looms in the woollen and worsted manufacture in the United States. The American Woolen Company had 8,900 looms, or somewhat less than one-eighth of the weaving equipment of the entire industry. The average profits of the best managed concerns engaged in the woollen and worsted business in this country are usually estimated at from 6 to 8 per cent.

THE TARIFF AND THE WAGES. American woollen and worsted mills pay more money for both their domestic and foreign wools because of the protective tariff designed to shield American wool growers. The manufacturers recognize that protection is a national policy designed to make the country independent and through diversification of industry to give better employment and higher wages to labor. American manufacturers pay higher wages to their operatives—wages twice as high as their competitors of England and more than twice as high as their competitors of the continent of Europe. Between 1897 and 1907 the average wages of woollen operatives in America, according to the Federal Bureau of Labor, increased 31 per cent., and through the existence of this industry the employees engaged therein are withdrawn from competition for work in other fields of labor, thereby making higher wages possible in other occupations.

A very interesting study of conditions in the American textile manufacture has just been made by Prof. William Davis of the Hawick Technical Institute of England. As to the workers Dr. Davis has this to say:

"AMERICA IS GOOD TO THE WORKER." "America is good to the worker. He is a man of importance here. Much is expected of him and in return he secures wages much higher than at home. This has the effect of increasing his self-respect; he clothes himself better, he lives in a more roomy and convenient dwelling. Perhaps something to do with the unquenched optimism of the American. He is never downhearted, but after failure at once sets himself for another determined try. He is broadminded and impressed by the magnitude and resources of his country. He is kindly disposed toward emigrants of the right sort and is glad to have them make their home here."

The American wool manufacture of to-day is even more distinctively than the great iron and steel industry a product of the protective tariff system. There was spasmodic protection for this industry in the various tariff laws up to 1861. Wool was not a Southern product and therefore the industry received scant favor from the public men who were dominant in Congress from 1846 to the outbreak of the civil war. During a part of this time wool manufacturers were actually dutiable at the same ad valorem rate as the raw material of which they were composed. The English manufacturers of Bradford wrote to Congress at this period remonstrating against any American protective duty on worsted fabrics, on the ground that they were not and could not be made in the United States—and Congress meekly assented to their preposterous demand. This was still the age of feeble provincialism in America.

It was the civil war of 1861-65 which created the woollen manufacture of this country as we now know it. The clothing of the huge Federal armies in strong, durable fabrics mightily stimulated the business of American mills, for the Government of Lincoln recognized that it could no more depend upon Europe for the uniforms and blankets of its soldiers than it could for rifles and cannon, shot and shell. Even before the war, however, in the early spring of 1861, the first Morrill protective tariff act had provided a potent stimulus for the industry.

THE BRUNT OF THE ATTACKS ON THE TARIFF. "It has been the fortune or misfortune of the wool and woollen schedule to seem higher for many years than any other portion of the tariff," said a manufacturer. "Other great textile interests, silk and cotton, have their raw materials free of duty in the United States. The

wool manufacturer on the other hand is required to pay a relatively high protective duty on the crude material of his charge. Corresponding duty must be charged upon the raw material contained in imported goods to equalize the higher cost of material used by the domestic mills. It is the addition of this duty on the material contained in imported goods that makes the total ad valorem equivalent relatively higher, while the real protective duty on woollen goods does not average higher than the highest protective rates accorded to manufacturers of cotton and silk.

"In 1894 the Gorman-Wilson tariff law put raw wool of all kinds on the free list and left cloths and dress goods dutiable at 40 and 50 per cent. ad valorem. This was nominally only a small reduction in the protection of American manufacturers, but in practice it proved to be an excessive and disastrous reduction. The McKinley tariff, which the new law displaced, had, like the present tariff, a compound duty on wool manufactures—that is, a duty partly specific, or so many cents a pound, and partly ad valorem. In the Gorman-Wilson law the specific duty, or that part of the McKinley duty that was in effect a tariff on the raw material in the goods—i. e., a wool duty as distinguished from a protective duty on the manufactures—was necessarily eliminated. This duty, because it was in specific form, had been a firm barrier against fraudulent undervaluation of imported cloths and dress goods, which came through the ad valorem duty of the Gorman-Wilson law like a flood through a sagging mill dam.

WHEN THE TARIFF WAS LET DOWN. "The country was overwhelmed with foreign goods. One-half of the American market was seized by foreign manufacturers. Four-fifths of the American mills were at one time or another closed, and many of them were permanently abandoned. On the other hand, the English mills at this same time, to quote an English manufacturer in the London Times, were being visited by the 'rush of business' from the free list. The Yorkshire Observer described the year 1895 as 'the most extraordinary of the waning century.' Almost the entire increase of exports, it was further pointed out, 'has come through the increased trade with the United States.'

The nominal 40 or 50 per cent. of ad valorem protection on American wool manufactures proved to be no more than an actual 30 per cent., which was altogether insufficient to span the difference in the cost of production between this country and abroad—even though all wools were on the free list. Three years of this costly economic experiment more than sufficed the American people. The Gorman-Wilson law was repealed in 1897 with the cordial assent of all interested except the manufacturers of Europe and their agents in the United States, who had enjoyed the most prosperous period in their history.

"During that Gorman-Wilson experiment the American people were swiftly disillusioned on one point. Politicians and newspapers had given them to expect not only a great lowering in the price but a great advance in the quality of clothing as a result of free importations of foreign cloths and dress goods. Of course a great many fine fabrics are produced in European mills. It is chiefly fabrics of this superior kind that used to be and are now sent by foreign manufacturers to America. The Gorman-Wilson experiment taught the American people something which manufacturers and merchants well know, but which the people had not suspected—that while Europe makes many excellent woollen and worsted fabrics it makes more that are very poor indeed. Together with some good fabrics there came into this country under the low duties of 1894-1897 an avalanche of 'imported' stuff that was both cheap and bad. The net result of that particular tariff revision was not an improvement, but a degradation of the clothing of the American people—as an overwhelming majority of the people agreed when they registered their verdict on that ill-fated law in 1894 and 1895.

CHEAPER PRICES AND CHEAPER QUALITY. "That experiment of excessive tariff reduction, which proved such a disappointment once, is likely to have precisely the same result again if it is attempted. Free trade may cheapen prices, but it cheapens quality also, and apparently it cheapens wages most of all. Prof. Bowley of the London school of Economics estimates that more than one million adult Englishmen, the principal breadwinners and heads of families, are now earning less than \$5 a week and that one million and a half more are earning only from \$5 to \$6.75. Even in a country of free wool the clothing of these two and one-half million English workers and their families is a formidable economic problem which explains the existence of the famous district of Batley and Dewsbury, the great centre of the shoddy manufacture of the world. While the use of shoddy as a substitute for new wool is steadily decreasing in professional America, the art is flourishing more and more in the only nation that now clings to a policy of free trade or its synonym, a tariff for revenue only. That single English district of Batley and Dewsbury consumes in one year more shoddy than is manufactured in the whole United States. It not only uses all the domestic rags of Britain but imports twice as many more from other countries, while the United States under the present tariff does not even use up its own rag product, but exports thousands of tons to England.

"When your tariff shows a commendable high priced English cloth it may not be hyperbolic to say, although it is always well to bear in mind that a great deal of 'imported' cloth is very good American cloth from admirable mills in New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania or Ohio. But the same tariff revision with an axe which admits excellent foreign goods admits also the products of Batley and Dewsbury and the Continental centres of wool 'renaissance.' That is not just what the foes of the present protective system have been promising, but it is exactly what 'arrived' out of the downward revision of 1894-1897.

THE WOOL MAN'S VIEW.

"Those politicians that are teaching people to believe that a reduction of the tariff will enable them to purchase clothing twice as good as now for the same money or clothing just as good for half the price as a fact is a sober day reckoning. All the cloth required for the making of a ready to wear suit of the kind that sells at retail for from \$15 to \$20 can be bought at the mill for from \$3.50 to \$5. And that cloth can be made in this country and is made here just as well as it could be in Europe, at the lowest price consistent with a living wage for the operatives, because it has been made for many years here, by the millions of yards and our mills know now.

"The urgent problem of the present day is not so much the problem of economical production as it is of protective production. A certain great Philadelphia department store was selling large quantities of a new pattern of dress goods imported from France. The fabric was very attractive in texture and design and the demand grew so large that the French manufacturer, with his limited facilities, could not supply it. A certain American mill was invited by the managers of the department store to duplicate the fabric, and this was done with perfect success. To the American manufacturer was paid \$1.10 a yard for the goods, and on a visit to the Philadelphia store he was surprised to find his product selling over the counter for \$3 a yard.

DECKET IN "IMPORTED" STOCK.

"A great many American made fabrics of high quality are and always have been sold as imported articles. This is due to the peculiar spirit of colonialism not confined to the United States. Thus the English people are said to have a prejudice in favor of French made silks and dress goods—a prejudice which has been very costly to the textile manufacturers of the United Kingdom. Similarly the German people, though their country contains a superb textile industry, used to have a preference for English cloth and would buy it at prices higher than were paid for German fabrics of like quality. "But this prejudice for foreign made goods is apparently lessening in the United States, as in the enlightened countries of Europe. Merchants recognize that intelligent buyers are familiar with the excellence of American goods and manufacturers are less often mortified by seeing their fabrics sold at retail as imported from Germany or France or England. The best stores in this country more and more offer American goods, frankly as American. They are doing so, and they are encouraged by the steady advance which American woollen and worsted mills are making in the production of the very finest varieties of cloths and dress goods which were once imported as a matter of course. One marked advantage which American mills have over their foreign competitors besides the protective tariff is their ability to make quick deliveries of goods in the quantities required by the merchants. This fact of itself is steadily gaining increased favor for American merchandise.

THE GERMAN TEN COMMANDMENTS.

"The strengthening of the national spirit all over the world is encouraging a marked growth of preference for native productions. Perhaps the Germans are just now the conspicuous leaders in this direction. The following ten commandments of German commerce are rather enthusiastic and aggressive than any appeal that has yet been made to the American people:

1. Never lose sight of the interests of your compatriots or of the fatherland. 2. Do not forget that when you buy a foreign product, no matter if it is only a cent's worth, you diminish the fatherland's wealth by just so much. 3. Your money should profit only German merchants and workmen. 4. Do not profane German soil, a German house or a German workshop by using foreign machinery and tools. 5. If you do not like the German malted coffee drink coffee from the German colonies. If you prefer chocolate or cocoa for the children have a care that the chocolate and cocoa are of exclusively German production. 6. Do not let foreign boasters divert you from these safe precepts. Be convinced whatever you may hear that the best products, which are alone worthy of a German citizen, are German products."

DISEASE PREVENTION.

A Large Item of Expense for the Sheep Raiser Nowadays.

One of the chief items of cost in the raising of sheep that has been found is the work carried on to prevent disease among the animals. Sheep men in the West, where the nomadic herder has been accustomed to wander from range to range, have learned that they cannot be too careful along this point. Losses of millions of dollars have resulted because of carelessness in the respect and now all of the Western States have stringent dipping laws. In dipping, the sheep are forced to swim singly, through long trenches, filled with a solution of tobacco and sulphur or some other germ destroying concoction. This is recognized as the best preventive of scabies, the disease that plays the greatest havoc with sheep.

Scabies is caused by a parasite germ, which spreads over the sheep's body, causing intense itching, rapid emaciation and death. In the West it is considered a high crime for a stockmaster to allow infected sheep the run of the open range as perfectly sound sheep may pass that way months later and be infected. Dipping is done regularly in all sheep communities. In Wyoming no sheep can be brought into the State unless it is immediately after crossing the State line, and if they show signs of infection they are held in quarantine on a clean range. So vigorous is this warfare against infection in Wyoming and other great sheep States that even the sheep shipped for market must be sent in disinfectant cars. Crews of experienced men must be maintained at these dipping stations and as all these things cost money the sheep man must bear the expense. The solutions in which sheep are dipped are quite expensive and dipping must enter heavily into the calculations of the operator, who, perhaps, has several hundred thousand head of sheep running under his brand.

Big Prices in New Zealand.

Record prices are reported to have been paid for prize rams exhibited in the big ram fair in New Zealand recently when some of the finest specimens from the south of England were put up for sale. The biggest price was paid for a ram called "Record Breaker Fifth," which brought \$1,000. A yearling named "Record Fourth" sold for \$500 and "Record Breaker Forty-first" also netted \$500. As did "Sixty-six." Other animals were sold at prices ranging from \$100 up to \$350 each. These are said to be the highest prices on record, even for prize winning animals.

AMERICAN CLOTHES LEAD.

President of Great Woolen Company Says Fabrics Made Here Are Unsurpassed.

"Though the American wool manufacture increased more heavily in the five years prior to 1900 than in the history of the industry, this growth is not abnormal," says William M. Wood, president of the American Woolen Company. "It is only a natural and legitimate part of the general industrial expansion of the United States. The amount of capital invested in the woollen and worsted mills of this country shows an increase from \$256,000,000 in 1890 to \$415,000,000 in 1909, or 62 per cent. for the entire decade. During the same time the value of the products of the industry increased from \$213,000,000 to \$419,000,000, or 76 per cent. Between 1904 and 1909 the gain in value of product was more than \$100,000,000.

"Great new mills have been erected and elaborately equipped, and prosperous smaller mills have enlarged and modernized their facilities. Yet in years of normal business there ought to be employment for all of this woollen and worsted machinery. The United States is the best market for woollen and worsted fabrics in the world. Its people are the most prosperous. They expect to buy, and have the money to buy, the most durable and comfortable clothing. Most of these fabrics come from American mills, but it must not be forgotten that wool manufactures of a duty paid value of not less than \$35,000,000 are annually purchased from abroad. These fabrics, or most of them, ought also to be manufactured in America. If this were done there would be no lack of employment, no idle and unprofitable machinery.

"It ought to be a point of pride with all American citizens to wear American clothing made out of American fabrics, than which there are no better in the world. Merchants who handle both American and foreign goods have frankly testified of late years to the superiority of American cloths in the beauty of their designs and the durability of the fabrics and their colors. These facts are more and more adequately realized by the purchasers themselves. Both in men's wear cloths and in dress goods the proportion of American fabrics brought and worn in the United States is steadily increasing. "But imports of \$35,000,000 a year, employment."

they paid, are larger than they ought to be. They show that some of our people still retain the old provincial preference for foreign goods. It is quite likely that the total number of people of this kind is decreasing, but there is very little excuse in our time for the notion they cherish.

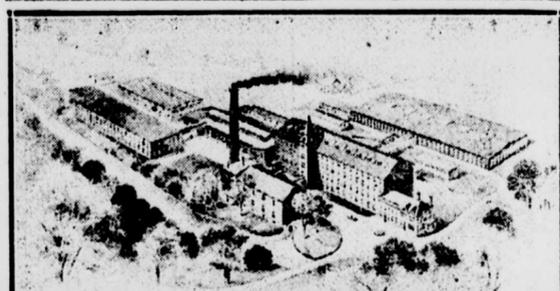
The newest and best American mills are equipped with the best machinery that can be procured on this or the other side of the Atlantic. The employees of these mills are paid twice the wages of expert English operatives for doing the same amount and quality of work. This fact the Tariff Board report has fully demonstrated. This Tariff Board report, by the way, pays a compliment to American manufacturers. Agents of the Board found abroad that "for-12" manufacturers do not keep their costs in any detail" as do the best American mills. Good machinery, high wages and administrative efficiency should certainly be able to give American mills a competitive edge as good as the very best of the overseas competitors. I believe that they are doing this.

HARD TO GET GOOD HELP.

Mill Superintendents Find That Competent Hands Are Scarce.

It is not as easy a matter now to get suitable mill hands for textile weaving, managers of mills say. The operators do not take as much interest in their work as those of a generation ago did and few are learning the business. Continual political agitation has already had an unfavorable effect on the woollen industry.

"We find it very hard to get good help," said William Einstein of the Bound Brook Woolen Mills. "These political discussions in Washington have been bad for the woollen business and a continuance of them will hurt the industry still more. This coupled with the troubles we have to get suitable help in the mills makes our position a difficult one. "Twenty years ago we could get excellent hands, workers who took an active interest in their employment and were anxious to get ahead. Now we have to put up with immigrants, slaves or Southern Italians mostly. Their efficiency is low and they do not learn quickly. Owing to political agitation and the damage it does to our business we are not always able to give steady employment, and as a result we cannot get good help, who, naturally, go into occupations where they are certain of steady employment."



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