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Textile World Record

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ALL INTERESTED IN THE PROCESSES AND
PRODUCTS OF TEXTILE MANUFACTURING

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BOSTON, April 14, 1909.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,

New York.

My dear Miss Tarbell:

I am pleased to have your letter of the 13th inst., indicating as it does that you have decided to take hold of schedule K in earnest. The women of the country could settle this wool tariff question right in a very short time if they were so disposed. We have recently had proof of their power in such matters. Now as to suggestions for your tariff talk to women, it seems to me that the difficulty begins with the irregular tariff on wool and wool substitutes. This tariff admits at a comparatively low duty the more expensive grades of wool suited for the fine and high priced fabrics, while excluding the cheaper grades of wool and wool substitutes by prohibitory duties.

It will not be necessary for me to explain to you how a uniform specific duty on grease wool brings about this result by reason of the widely varying proportions of grease and dirt in the grease wool. The high duties on wool substitutes speak for themselves. The remedy for this difficulty is to be found in an honest and thorough revision of the tariff on wool so as to admit all grades on equally fair terms.

The following statistics of the consumption of wool compiled by me a year or two ago from the most reliable sources show how great is the dependence of the United States on the foreign supply of wool:

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Distribution of Wool.
In World exclusive of Tropics.

	grease	scoured
World's clip	2,643,000,000 lbs.	1,468,000,000 lbs.

Per capita exclusive of tropics 20.08 ozs. wool
1,440,000,000 14.06 " cloth
Tropics 271,000,000 Lt. Wt.cloth 1.32 sq. yds.
1,169,000,000

United States.

Domestic	298,294,750 lbs.	130,359,118 lbs.
Net imports 1907	251,538,305 "	176,076,813 "
	549,833,055 "	306,435,931 "

Per capita for 90,000,000 scoured wool 54 1/2 ozs.
cloth 38 1/8 "
Lt. Wt.cloth 3.57 sq. yds.

World Exclusive of U. S. and Tropics.

Wool clip outside U. S.	2,345,239,044 lbs.	1,337,640,882 lbs.
Less U. S. Imports	251,538,305 "	176,076,813 "
	2,093,700,739 "	1,161,564,069 "

Per capita for 1,079,000,000 Wool 17.2 ozs.
Light weight 12. "
cloth 1 1/8 sq. yds

The very small quantity of pure wool cloth per capita shows without further proof how necessary it is for people in temperate and cold climates to depend upon the use of wool substitutes. There is an unwarranted prejudice against these substitutes because their name, shoddy, is also used in another sense to indicate the fraudulent character of men and things. The French and German avoid this mistake, the former calling shoddy "laine renaissance" and the latter calling it "kunstwolle". I hope that you will start your campaign right on this point and not encourage the popular error that wool substitutes are necessarily a cheat. Many of them are superior in quality, length of staple and suitability for serviceable cloth to many grades of wool. This point is illustrated in the enclosed article "The Threatened Chaos of the Woolen Industry" which I wrote several years ago.

It has seemed to me that popular attention might be focused on this wool question by showing how necessary wool is for protecting the people against many diseases. This is a field which has not been investigated very thoroughly

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and for that reason offers you the better opportunity. Would it not be a good plan for you to obtain carefully prepared opinions from a number of reliable physicians regarding the danger to health by improper protection against cold and wet? It seems to me it would and if the people were made to realize how necessary the supply of wool is, that a demand for a removal of the restrictions on that supply would become overwhelming. After our conversation you will, of course, without further explanation understand that I am not in favor of what is known as free wool, believing that the wool grower has as much right to protection as the wool manufacturer has. I am dealing now particularly with the abuses of the wool tariff and am not advocating a complete removal of the duties on wool.

Coming now to the manufactures of wool, the need is here also for a thorough and honest revision of the rates which will afford ample protection to the manufacturer and yet remove the outrageous inequalities which favor some manufacturers at the expense of others and which also result in oppressing the consumer. I have expressed my opinions very freely on these points in various articles in the Textile World Record, which I believe you have. They have run through the last six issues without interruption and if there are any you have not received let me know and I will send them to you.

I want to call your particular attention to the table on page 80 of our April issue, which shows the Dingley duties on 10,000 pounds of wool at the different stages of its manufacture into worsted cloth, also the increase in the labor cost at each stage. You must not forget that this labor cost does not include the entire cost of manufacturing, but only the wages paid to the operatives in the mill. This labor cost, however, forms the greater part of the cost of manufacturing and the table gives a very good idea of the relative costs of the different processes. You will see at a glance that the changes in the duties bear no regular relation to the increases in the cost and nevertheless the Senate Committee has had the hardihood to restore the Dingley rates, abandoning even the slight and in many cases purely nominal changes which the Ways and

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Means Committee was forced to make by the scandal over this schedule.

Here is one point that would appeal particularly to women in connection with this wool tariff. The great advantage of an honest and thorough revision of schedule K would be the vast improvement in the quality of the wool goods that manufacturers could produce at the same price as now. It is a common saying in woolen mills that a manufacturer cannot make a whistle out of a pig's tail, in other words, a good piece of cloth cannot be made out of poor raw material. This is self-evident and an honest revision of schedule K would result in a great improvement in the quality of the goods produced by the mills. The cloth would be more durable, more attractive, would drape better and make a much better garment without any increase in the cost.

Probably a point that would appeal even more strongly to them is that an honest revision of schedule K would provide better protection to the health of the people, particularly the children. I am not going to express my opinion regarding the extent of this advantage in advance but I am strongly of the opinion that if the truth was known the demand for a better supply of wool would be overwhelming. The men as well as the women of the country should be aroused. Better clothing for the poor and the middle classes should be the slogan, and you are the logical leader in such a movement.

If there are any special points on which you would like to have me write you I shall be glad to do so.

Yours very truly,

Sam'l S. Dale,

P. S. You spoke of the intricacies of the wool schedule. While this schedule is somewhat intricate yet I hope you will not hesitate on that account, but wade right into it. As a matter of fact the details of the textile industry are not as complicated as they appear at first sight. As an example of this I will site the fact that the analysis of cloth by the method described in the enclosed

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article is so easy that one who has had no mill experience can learn to analyze ordinary fabrics in a few hours. You will find the subject of textiles of absorbing interest as you get deeper into it.

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