

**WINDOW GLASS TRUST.****Another Example of a Tariff Trust.**

While the various glass industries are not now as conspicuous tariff trust industries as the tin plate industry, they illustrate even better than does the tin plate industry the pernicious effects of the protective tariff and the outrages of the combinations, or "trusts," to which it leads.

The history of our glass industries for the last 20 years has been a succession of combinations, pools, lock-outs, price-list committees, and agreements fixing prices and wages and limiting production on the part of the manufacturers; and of labor unions, strikes, wage committees and wage-scale agreements, on the part of the glass workers. Wages and prices change often and radically and nearly all of these tariff-nursed industries are always in an unsettled, unstable and unhealthy condition.

**The Industry in a Backward State.**

The result is that we usually pay double price for our glass and both the industry and the workers are in a backward state of development—fully ten years behind those of Belgium.

Instead of making the best and cheapest glass and of dominating the world's markets, as our unrivalled opportunities for production would warrant—cheapest and best silica, coal, gas and lumber—we are, thanks to our tariff system, only partially supplying our own market, and even that with inferior goods which sell at double the price of better goods in Europe.

Instead of the workers being—as are most workers in the unprotected industries—the most skillful and independent of any on earth, they are—especially in the highly protected window glass industry—not as highly skilled as are the Belgians who are continually coming over to recruit our skilled labor ranks, after paying the \$500 per capita tariff which our labor union forces from them before they can go to work.

The glass trusts, with their tariff clubs, hold up the American consumer and make him pay \$2 for one dollar's worth of glass. The labor unions, with their alien contract labor laws and stringent apprenticeship rules, hold up the manufacturers and succeed in getting about 25 cents out of every extra tariff-dollar wrung from the consumers.

The evils of such methods are not only apparent throughout the glass industry and in the glass-consuming industries, but they extend into state and national politics and form a part of the "boss" system of government.

Under such conditions and circumstances, it is a national sin to continue this tax on sunlight. Some of the leading manufacturers do not hesitate to say that if there had never been any tariff on glass our glass industry would

now be twice as large as it is and would be employing twice as many men and using twice as much coal, gas, lumber, etc.

**The Glass Trusts.**

Besides the window glass, which will be considered at some length, there are the following trusts in the glass industry:

Pittsburg Plate Glass Co., capital \$10,000,000. Controls 682 out of 946 pots, and agrees on prices with most outsiders. Has about doubled prices in last two years. Pays very low wages—mostly \$1.35 to \$1.80 a day—and allows no organization of workers. Has very high tariff protection and utilizes all of it in its scale of prices.

National Mirror Manufacturers Association, has a membership of 58 and covers every section of the country. Met on September 30th, and advanced prices 10 to 15 per cent.

The National Glass Co., the tableware combine, is almost completed with \$4,000,000 capital. It will include about 20 plants with a productive capacity of about 600 pots.

The Macbeth-Evans Glass Co. owns nine lamp chimney plants and over half of the producing capacity. Is exceptional in that it exports largely, asks for no tariff favors, but for free raw materials.

Both the Green and Flint Bottle manufacturers have organizations which fix prices and wages.

There are smaller trusts within these trusts and in other branches of the industry.

**The Labor Unions.**

Labor unions, which are more of the nature of trusts than are most labor unions, exist in about every branch of the glass industry, except that of plate glass. Some of these organizations are:

American Flint Glass Workers Union, Window Glass Workers Association, Window Glass Cutters Association, United Green Glass Workers Association, Window Glass Flatteners Association, Green Bottle Blowers Association, Improved Green Glass Pressers League.

There are many sub-unions under these national and general unions and hundreds of branches and secretaries. Thus there are thirteen sub-unions and 133 secretaries of local unions in the American Flint Glass Workers Association.

It is not intended here to complain of labor unions in general any more than of trusts in general. It is only intended to show that the protective tariff tends to make both trusts and unions bad, and to enable them, together, to lock up an industry in the hands of a few who disregard entirely the interests of consumers and outside laborers. The tariff invites manufacturers to organize to fight their employees and the consumer, and almost compels the employees to organize to fight the manufacturers and

the consumers. Tariff and trusts are the two parts of the machine for regulating production and prices; and iron-clad agreements, apprenticeship rules and alien-contract labor laws constitute the workers machine for extracting a part of the tariff spoils from the trusts.

**The Window Glass Trust.**

As in most other branches of the glass industry, trusts in some form have existed in window glass for twenty years.

The American Window Glass Manufacturers Association with its "Price List Committee," its "Board of Control," its "District" and "National Wage" Committee, and its "Tariff Committee," was running full blast from about 1880 to 1888, and was deciding how many and what works should be closed and what wages should be paid and prices charged. It worked hard to prevent the passage of the Mills bill in 1888. In 1884, when there was a shortage of glass, caused by a lockout and a long fight over wage scales, the manufacturers themselves became importers to supply the trade.

There have been since 1880, periods of comparative competition and low prices; but during such periods the "trust" people have been playing for a new deal and a new grip on the industry. Since 1890 the United Glass Company, a corporation owning 17 of the 108 plants then in existence, has formed the backbone of the window glass trust. From 1893 to 1895 the trust was not in good working order and prices were comparatively low.

**The Present Trust.**

In 1895 the American Glass Company, selling pool for 85 per cent of the factories, was formed. This pool soon had prices up to the importing point, where it held them firmly until succeeded by the American Window Glass Company, a corporation with \$17,000,000 capital formed in October, 1899. This owns factories with a capacity of about 1900 pots out of a total capacity of about 2,600 pots. It has not lowered prices which are about double what they were four years ago.

The estimated value of the 48 or 50 plants absorbed is said to have been put at \$6,190,000 by one of the organizers.

**Prices and Profits.**

There are so many sizes and grades of window glass, the schedules of prices and discounts are so complex, and the prices change so often and differ so much in different districts that it is difficult to compare prices. In general prices for the last three years have been nearly double what they were for the previous three years, and, the duty averaging nearly 100 per cent, prices are about double what they are in Belgium or England. The following summary