

CHAPTER XIX

THE TINPLATE AND THE NON-FERROUS METALLURGICAL INDUSTRIES OF SOUTH WALES

PART I

TINPLATES

THE manufacture of tinplate and black sheets is one of high importance to the country, utilising, as it does, some 2,000,000 to 2,500,000 tons of steel yearly. The production of tinplate can be claimed as practically a Welsh industry, being carried on chiefly in Glamorgan-shire and Carmarthenshire with Monmouthshire, where are respectively centred 288, 91 and 57 tinplate mills. There are, however, many mills in other counties. These roll down steel billets and bars into sheets of the required thickness.

Tinplates are thin steel sheets coated with tin, and are used for the production of holders for petrol, for canning foods, for packing tobacco and other purposes too numerous to mention. Tinplate makes the only metal container capable of being hermetically sealed, and is the safest one in existence. It has proved itself unrivalled for canning vegetables, fruit, fish, meat, tobacco and every other kind of perishable article. Recently, amongst the remains of the Franklin Expedition of 1848 to the North Pole, there was found a tin of preserved beef. When this was opened, the meat, after nearly eighty years, was still perfectly sound and good. The use of tinplate for the conservation of alimentary products and other similar purposes is now universal and constantly extending.