

AMERICAN FOOD IN GERMANY.

Meat Inspection Bill Found to Seriously Affect the Agrarians Themselves —Indemnity Clause Demanded.

BERLIN, Dec. 3.—The Imperial Meat Inspection bill, which was introduced in the Reichstag early in the session, is now taking a surprising turn. The Agrarians themselves, for whose special benefit the bill was intended, now strongly object to it unless, as they assert, it is greatly altered. They find that the bill in its present form cuts them nearly as much as it does the American meat importers, inasmuch as it provides for a rigid inspection of their own meat when it is brought to market, and for its rejection or confiscation if it is found to be diseased.

Therefore, since there is an enormous amount of disease in German cattle and swine, as shown by official statistics and the regular publications of the Reichsanzeiger, all this will hit them very hard, unless the Government agrees to reimburse the owners of confiscated or rejected meats.

Very strong pressure has been brought to bear on the Imperial Government to insert a clause in the bill providing for the indemnification of domestic owners, and over this clause a wrangle is now proceeding between the various German Governments. Prussia favors a moderate indemnification, while the other German States are nearly all against it.

Agreement on this important point appears to be extremely doubtful, and, therefore, there is a very strong possibility of the bill not reaching the Reichstag this season. It is also quite certain that the Centre, without whose votes the bill cannot pass, is divided on the subject. The majority, representing the industrial districts of the Rhine and Westphalia, refuses to vote for any such bill.

In the meanwhile, the Agrarian press continues its warfare on all American meat, its main organs, the Deutsche Tage-Zeitung and the Hamburger Nachrichten, advocating the total exclusion of all American canned meats and sausages.

In strange contrast with this is a memorial about the meat famine, drawn up by the municipality of Berlin, which proves that the German breeders do not raise enough cattle and pigs to satisfy the needs of the nation, and that the systematic exclusion of foreign cattle and swine has decidedly lowered the quality of the meat brought to the market, and has heightened the price to such an extent that horse, and even dog's meat, has become staple with the poorer classes in certain districts, and notably in the large cities.

The memorial also proves that the meat consumption of Berlin has decreased since the rigid exclusion of foreign meats.

The German Agrarian press, on the other hand, publishes alleged official statistics to show that the import of American pork increased enormously during the current year and may reach the figures of 1897.

One of the largest Berlin wholesale dealers writes to the Vossische-Zeitung saying that the statement in the Agrarian press that much of the imported American flour is adulterated is utterly untrue. He adds that not a single case of adulteration has been discovered in the Berlin market. German dealers in America have also forwarded to the Imperial Hygienic Bureau a protest against these prejudicial statements.