

	Exports.	Imports.
Great Britain.....	\$48,353,694	\$ 43,390,241
United States.....	40,522,810	52,291,973
France.....	278,552	2,615,602
Germany.....	507,143	3,778,993
Spain.....	69,788	322,506
Portugal.....	207,777	84,034
Italy.....	84,059	163,486
Holland.....	1,042	422,267
Belgium.....	41,814	721,332
Newfoundland.....	1,185,739	469,711
West Indies.....	2,719,141	3,089,048
South America.....	1,551,887	1,003,962
China and Japan.....	61,751	2,100,065
Australia.....	471,028	205,384
Switzerland.....	400	216,523
Other countries.....	695,524	1,790,457
	\$96,749,149	\$112,765,584

Canada's trade with the United Kingdom and the United States for the years named was as follows :

	Exports to Great Britain.	Imports from Great Britain.	Exports to United St. tes.	Imports from United States.
1886.....	\$41,542,629	\$40,061,199	\$36,578,769	\$44,858,039
1887.....	44,571,847	44,962,233	37,660,199	45,107,066
1888.....	40,084,984	39,298,721	42,572,065	48,481,848
1889.....	38,105,126	42,317,389	43,522,404	50,537,440
1890.....	48,353,694	43,390,241	40,522,810	52,291,873

FEMALE EMPLOYEES IN FACTORIES.

At a recent meeting of the Toronto Trades and Labor Council, the Legislative Committee drew attention to the fact that "in a number of factories in this city, whose employees are principally children, girls and women the dinner hour has been reduced by the order of the employers, and with the connivance and consent of one of the Ontario factory inspectors, despite the provisions of the law." It is stated that the Council empowered the committee to lay this charge before the Ontario Government.

As we understand them, the facts of this matter are : in one or more factories where there are children, young girls and women employed, as well as men also, a mutual understanding was entered into whereby the dinner hour was curtailed some minutes, to enable the employees to get away from their work that much earlier in the evening. Almost without exception these women and children take their dinners with them to their work ; and it is no inconvenience to them whatever to get through with their meal, not having to leave the building, and resume work before the expiration of the noon hour. The days at this season of the year are very short, and these employees find it exceedingly convenient to be able to quit work before six o'clock. This they could not do under any other arrangement and work the stipulated number of hours during the day. Quitting work before six o'clock enables them to find seats in the street cars, those who have necessity to ride in them, before the great rush which always occurs at the general quitting time. This arrangement is generally appreciated by the employees in question ; and we are informed that no complaints have ever been made by them regarding the shortening of the dinner hour.

It is true the Ontario Factories' Act—sec. 6, sub sec. 4—and each young girl and woman therein employed not less than

one hour at noon of each day for meals, but such hour shall not be counted as part of the time herein limited as respects the employment of children, young girls and women." This law was made for the special benefit of this class of employees ; but it would be an act of oppression to rigorously enforce it by insisting that a full hour shall be taken at dinner time, and compelling them to remain at their work until six o'clock, when they prefer to take shorter time at dinner for the sake of getting away earlier in the evening. A canvas among the employees of one large concern, where over a hundred women and children work, disclosed the fact that but two girls objected to the shortening of the noon hour. They knew that work was abandoned before six o'clock, and they thought that, while they enjoyed the privilege of thus quitting, they had a right to demand the sixty minutes at noon. When the situation was explained to them, they at once declared in favor of the existing arrangement, and withdrew their complaint. A strict construction of the law might require the employer to grant the full hour at noon, which the employees do not desire ; but on the other hand the employers would have a right to keep their employees at work until six o'clock, to the inconvenience of all concerned. Why not then allow the existing arrangement to remain as it is ? It would be time to enforce the letter of the law if the employees so desired ; but as long as they are satisfied with the arrangement, the matter should rest as it is.

The complaint, we understand, does not come from these women and children. In these factories some men are employed, and we are told the complaint comes from them. They object to have their dinner hour shortened for the accommodation of the women and children, and do not care to sacrifice time in the middle of the day for the sake of retiring from work before six o'clock. This, we suppose, is the basis upon which the Legislative Committee formulate their complaint. If the law is not utterly inflexible—if there may be some concessions from it in the interests of those for whom it was made—and if the facts, as here alluded to, are properly laid before the Ontario Government, the factory inspector, who has fallen under the Trades and Labor Council's displeasure, will be speedily vindicated. If the Government cannot see themselves free to construe the law with leniency it should be repealed.

THE MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION'S SECRETARY.

AN exceedingly pleasing event of the holiday season just past was the presentation to Mr. Frederic Nicholls, Secretary of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, on Christmas Eve, of an album containing an address that was voted to him with a gold watch at the last annual meeting of the Association. It will be remembered that these souvenirs were to have been presented to Mr. Nicholls at a special meeting of the Association called to be held at the Association's offices at the Fair Grounds at the time of the regular annual Fair of the Toronto Industrial Exhibition Association in September last. Just before the time for the meeting at the Fair Grounds Mr. Nicholls was called out of town by imperative business, and the presentation was made to his proxy. The address had not then been engrossed in an album as was desired,