

It is, unfortunately, not possible to compare the quantities consumed of the articles enumerated with their retail prices to ascertain exactly the relation between prices and consumption. Where prices have fallen, it is generally assumed that the wholesale prices have fallen further and more rapidly than retail prices, though, in the case of sugar, all but the very poorest who may buy in very small quantities have benefitted to the full extent of the fall. Where prices have risen, retail prices may have risen higher than wholesale, or not so far, according to circumstances. Tobacco has probably risen higher in retail price than in wholesale; but the dealers in cigarettes last year were not able to raise prices to follow the wholesale price. The following comparison, however, is with Montreal wholesale prices as stated in the Statistical Year Book, 1896:—

## CONSUMPTION AND PRICES.

YEAR	COFFEE		SUGAR.		TEA.		TOBACCO.		SPIRITS.	
	Consumption per head, lbs.	Price per lb.	Consumption per head, lbs.	Price per lb.	Consumption per head, lbs.	Price per lb.	Consumption per head, lbs.	Price per lb.	Consumption per head, gal.	Price per gal.
1880	.4	27 cts.	26	10½ cts	2.7	51	1.94	54 cts	0.71	\$1 50
1881	.47	25	31	10	3.8	52	2 03	55½	0.92	1.60
1882	.71	23	30	9½	4.3	51	2.15	57½	1.01	1.60
1883	.6	22	34	9	4 0	51	2.28	47	1.09	1.60
1884	.53	21	38	7½	3.8	51	2.48	53½	1.00	1.60
1885	.94	20	43	7	4.0	51	2.62	51	1.13	1.67
1886	.85	19	38	6½	4.9	49	2.05	53	0.71	1 81
1887	.41	24	43	6½	3.8	43	2.06	51	0 75	1 81
1888	.6	25	43	7½	3.7	45	2.09	51	0 64	1 81
1889	.66	26	47	8	3 6	45	2.15	51	0.73	1.83
1890	.66	26	35	6½	3 8	45	2.14	51	0.88	1.84
1891	.69	27	40	6	3.7	42	2 29	53½	0.74	2.48
1892	.73	29	68	4½	4.4	39	2.29	56	0 70	2 88
1893	.77	29	51	4½	3.6	38½	2.31	54½	0.74	2.53
1894	.7	28	61	4½	4.1	38½	2.26	53½	0.74	2 51
1895	.72	27	70	4	4.0	35½	2.16	56	0 67	2 51
1896	.70	26	47	4½	4.4	33½	2.12	56	0.62	2 68