

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY

by

The Monetary Times
Printing Company
of Canada, Limited

Publishers also of

"The Canadian Engineer"

Monetary Times

Trade Review and Insurance Chronicle
of Canada

Established 1867

Old as Confederation

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Canada's Billion Dollar Trade

RECORD was made during the fiscal year 1913 and will be exceeded in 1914—What the Dominion buys and sells—Trade with Great Britain and the United States

THE accompanying tables illustrate the growth of Canadian trade during the four fiscal years ended March, 1913. The complete figures for the fiscal year ended March, 1914, are not yet available. In 1910, the aggregate trade was \$677,000,000. This has increased approximately \$100,000,000 a year until in the latest year for which official figures are available, it reached over a billion dollars, \$1,068,660,225. The imports naturally have grown far more rapidly than exports. The total imports of merchandise in 1910 were \$369,000,000, and last year, \$670,000,000, almost double. The proportions of dutiable and free imports have not varied greatly, the former in 1910 being \$227,000,000, and the latter \$142,000,000. In 1913, these items had changed to \$441,000,000, and \$228,000,000 respectively. The duty collected increased from \$61,000,000 to \$115,000,000. The coin and bullion imported varied in the different years, it being \$6,000,000 in 1910, \$10,000,000 in 1911, \$26,000,000 in 1912, and \$5,000,000 in 1913.

The total exports in 1910 were \$301,000,000. They declined to \$297,000,000 in 1911, but increased in the following year to \$315,000,000 and last year to \$393,000,000. The greater share of the exports were Canadian produce, last year being valued at \$355,000,000 of the \$393,000,000 total.

The preponderance of imports over exports creates what is known as Canada's "adverse" trade balance. It is illustrated in the following table:—

Fiscal year.	Total imports.	Total exports Canadian and foreign produce.	Aggregate trade.	Percentage of value of imports with aggregate trade.
	\$	\$	\$	%
1908 ..	370,786,525	280,006,606	650,793,131	56.97
1909 ..	309,756,608	261,512,159	571,268,767	54.22
1910 ..	391,852,692	301,358,529	693,211,221	56.52
1911 ..	472,247,540	297,196,365	769,443,905	61.37
1912 ..	559,320,544	315,317,250	874,637,794	63.94
1913 ..	691,943,515	393,232,057	1,085,175,572	63.76

During the past three years the percentage of the value of imports to the aggregate trade has materially risen, and in 1912-13 represented nearly sixty-four per cent. of the total trade. In five years our total exports have grown from \$280,000,000 to \$390,000,000.

The difference in the totals in the above table and those in the three accompanying tables is accounted for by the fact that the figures used by the Minister of Finance are the total imports, dutiable and free, while those of the other tables are total imports, dutiable and free, entered for consumption. Imports entered for consumption is the technical term applied to

goods which have passed into the possession of the importer and the duty paid.

The "unfavorable" trade balance was the cause of much comment last year. Hon. W. T. White, Minister of Finance, discussing it in the House of Commons recalled that during recent years of rapid material development and national progress a vast amount of capital expenditure has been and is being made upon railway construction and equipment by our three transcontinental systems, upon great public works and undertakings, in industrial and commercial enterprise and in municipal services and improvements to meet the needs of rapidly growing communities. That is to say, we are in the era of the construction of railways and great national works, and our cities have been growing so rapidly in population and area that the public needs have been greatly increased, with the result that they have had to make large expenditures of a capital nature upon their various public services. The greater portion of the funds required for this capital and productive expenditure has been borrowed from the British public by the Government of Canada, by the several provinces and by cities and towns, and railways, industrial and other corporations. The money so borrowed has come to Canada not in the form of cash or gold, but in importations of commodities and of materials from Great Britain or elsewhere. In addition to this we must bear in mind the important fact that the stream of immigration coming to our shores from year to year while bringing sufficient capital for its temporary maintenance and adding to our consumption does not immediately become a producing element in the community. In the light of these considerations it would appear, said Mr. White, that the apparent adverse balance of trade is due to causes making for the development of the Dominion and need be the occasion for no anxiety.

In his budget speech two weeks ago, Mr. White pointed out that a gratifying feature of the trade of 1913-14, the fiscal year just closed, was that the exports have increased in a marked ratio, and that the excess of imports over exports, which characterized the previous year, has been materially cut down. While in 1912-13 the percentage of the value of imports to the aggregate trade was nearly 64 per cent. up to the end of February, 1913, the percentage of imports to the aggregate trade for the 11 months ended February 28, 1914, was over 57½ per cent., or about the same proportion as in the year 1908. The increase in exports, while chiefly in agricultural products, is found to apply also to the products of mines, fisheries, forests, animals and their products and manufactures.

Agricultural products in every year contributed the largest share of the exports of Canadian produce, animal produce coming second in each case with the exception of 1913, when it was supplanted by mineral products. Exports of manufactures are comparatively small. Forest products contribute a goodly share and fisheries the smallest share. Exports of