

Gault's statement may have been for the calendar year, though that is new conjecture. In view of the possibility that he took the average for the calendar year, I give the following quotation: For the calendar year 1878 middling uplands in New York were 10.81 cents; 1879, 11.37 cents; 1880, 12.62 cents; 1881, 11.50 cents, or a rise of 0.69 or $6\frac{4}{10}$ per cent. between 1878 and 1881, and $\frac{1}{4}$ of a cent. or 2.13 per cent. between 1879 and 1881. I have established that neither the absolute nor the relative prices of raw cotton as between 1879 1881 present appreciable distinctions. We all know that for a certain number of months in 1878 raw cotton was very low, but the price for the year is such as I have pointed out. The Trade and Navigation Returns, the New York prices, and Mr. Gault, all pretty much agree as to the price for that year, and as to the prices for the succeeding year they also fairly agree, but Mr. Gault has, to an extent that I can not understand, exaggerated the prices in 1879-80-81 beyond the price of New York middling uplands, whether you take it for the calendar or the cotton year, or whichever way you choose to take it. I deny, therefore, the accuracy of Mr. Gault's statement as to the cost of the raw material; but supposing his statement to be accurate, I call attention to the fact—which has an important bearing on other facts which I shall bring before the House, and that Mr. Gault acknowledges the average price for 1879 was a trifle higher than that for 1881. In instituting comparisons between the prices of cotton in 1879 and 1881, we may leave out of account the question of raw material. There is a practical agreement as to prices even by Mr. Gault himself. As to the cost of labor we have no statistics. The hon. member for Montreal West gave us a number of statistics, but he did not give us statistics of this particular manufacture which I believe is outside of the limits of the city, but to which he knows something of the rate of wages prices. Now, my belief is that some professional and skilled workmen in the cotton mills have better wages than in former years, but so far as I have been able to learn, if you go down to the large wage-receiving classes no material advance in prices has taken place up to the point to which I will now speak, namely, December, 1881, when Mr. Gault gave his statement of prices on which the hon. Finance Minister relied. I am of course unable to deal with the topic accurately in the absence of accurate information; but the statement I have received is, that irrespective of the raise of prices among a few of the more skilled and higher priced men, there has been no sensible advance in wages up to the date to which I have referred. There is, however, an element, no doubt, one to which the hon. Minister has referred, which ought to lead to greater economy of production, and if we allow on the one hand for the reduced cost due to a larger production and improved machinery, the Hochelaga mill has been trebled in that respect, and therefore those conditions more than counterbalance any slight advance if, there be any, in the price of labor. Let us deal for a moment, before passing to the consideration of prices, with the cost of some standard cottons in the free markets of the world. I have obtained a statement of the cost of standard goods of the world wide known firms of Horrocks, Miller & Co., and James Findlay & Co. The former list shows these variations in what is called A cloth, a well-known standard number from January, 1877, to January, 1882:

		Pence stg.
January 26, 1877	32 inch A	3½
June 1, 1877	"	3½
October 25, 1877	"	3½
January 12, 1878	"	3½
June 19, 1878	"	3½
December 4, 1878	"	3½
January 22, 1879	"	2½
March 31, 1879	"	3
April 7, 1879	"	3
May 22, 1879	"	2½
July 1, 1879	"	3½

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January 16, 1880	32 inch A	3½
February 4, 1880	"	3½
February 17, 1880	"	3½
May 1, 1880	"	3½
July 12, 1880	"	3½
August 25, 1881	"	3½
January 4, 1882	"	3½

Giving you the range which has been obtained with the fluctuations such as they are largely dependent on the fluctuations in the raw material, showing no material change from 1877 to January, 1882. The prices from Findlay & Co., for J shirting another standard number, are as follows from August, 1876 to January, 1882:

		Pence stg.
August, 1876	32 inch "J"	4
January, 1878	"	3½
January, 1879	"	3½
February, 1880	"	3½
January, 1881	"	3½
January, 1882	"	3½

Thus indicating again that there has been no marked rise or any serious variation in price in these standard goods in the free market of the world. Now, to advert to Mr. Gault's letter in which he proposes to deal with the actual and relative cost of the two large classes of goods to which he refers as compared with their cost in former years. The points of comparison which I take are January, 1879, which is same as the end of 1878, May, 1879, a period at which changes were made in the price lists, and the average of the whole year of 1879, comparing each of these with December, 1881, the point of comparison which Mr. Gault gives. Now, Sir, let me once again state what his comparison of prices is. The prices realized for the average run of Canadian greys were, as he says, by the pound, in 1878, 26½ cents; in 1879, 28 cents; in 1880, 27 cents; in 1881, 28½ cents, giving an increase of but one-half cent on 28 cents between 1879 and 1881. As I have already pointed out the average cost of the raw material I will only add that in May, 1879, middling uplands cost 12½ cents in New York, while in December, 1879, they were 12 cents only. As the raw material is generally contracted for some time before, the monthly average is perhaps of less importance, except to point out that in the particular instance to which I referred the raw material was considerably higher in May, 1879, than in December, 1881. Now, to get at the advance in cost of grey cottons, which I aver to be considerable contrary to what hon. gentlemen has said, contrary to what I observe is being generally stated—I aver that there has been a very material and marked advantage in gray as well as in bleached cottons, and the mode I have adopted to get at the advance is this: I have taken three mills and five of the best known and most largely consumed brands at these mills, and these brands are also of a kind which will bear comparison one with another, being as nearly as possible the same in weight and texture. The mills I have taken are the Hochelaga, the Cornwall and the Dundas mills, and the brands are: Hochelaga, G, H, HHH, XX, and XXX. The Cornwall brands are: AW, AD, AC, AE, and AA. The Dundas brands are: D, C, B, A, AX. These brands corresponding as nearly as possible one with another in the order in which I have stated them. These represent very fairly the total product of these mills. I find that the average cost of these cottons was, in January, 1879, by the yard, 7.18 cents. The average for the year 1879, was 7.40 cents, and that average is obtained by taking the price lists for the months during which those price lists were in force, estimating a like average consumption per month, and thus reaching the average for the year. The average was, as I have said, 7.18 cents, in January, 1879; 7.40 cents, for the year 1879; 7.57 in the month of May, 1879; and 8.39 in December, 1881. Of those brands