

# The Chronicle

## Banking, Insurance & Finance.

ESTABLISHED JANUARY, 1881

R. WILSON-SMITH, Proprietor

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY

Vol. XXX. No 4.

MONTREAL, JANUARY 28, 1910.

Single Copy - 10c  
Annual Subscription \$200

**EXPORTS AND IMPORTS.** CANADA'S exports of domestic products during December reached a value of \$38,066,088. This compared with \$26,502,700 in the corresponding month of 1909. Some \$9,000,000 of the increase is to be credited to agricultural products. Imports for the month were \$30,774,900, as compared with \$23,130,672 a year before. For the calendar year 1909, domestic imports reached a value of over \$270,000,000—this being \$22,000,000 above the high mark attained in 1908. Imports for 1909 totalled about \$351,000,000. While this was an increase of about \$59,000,000 over 1908, it is some \$22,000,000 less than the 1907 record. The excess of imports over exports during 1909 was about \$81,000,000; in 1907 it was nearly \$135,000,000. In the case of a country which is being developed so largely by capital from abroad, an excess of imports over exports is inevitable. Still, the smaller the annual difference, the more evident is it that the Dominion is a profitable field for investment from without.

United States trade figures for 1909 were by no means so encouraging as those of Canada. While exports reached the huge total of \$1,727,383,000 that figure had been exceeded for three successive years before. Imports, on the other hand, passed even the high record of 1907, the 1909 total being \$1,475,520,000. The country's margin of exports over imports last year was \$334,000,000 less than in 1908—accounting for the year's exchange movement against America and the outflow of nearly \$133,000,000 in gold.

**BRITISH TRADE REVIVAL.** GREAT BRITAIN'S December trade returns indicate that business revival is now well under way in the old land—political unrest notwithstanding. Exports for the month showed an increase in comparison with December, 1908, of £4,388,000, or nearly 15 per cent. A large proportion of the December increase, £3,892,000, was in manufactured articles.

The figures for the complete year 1909 show the modest gain of £1,275,000 in exports—the twelve-month's total being £378,379,000. Imports were £624,740,000—a gain of £31,879,000. In connection with imports, the effect of higher prices upon the returns has to be remembered, e.g. grain and flour are over ten millions higher than in 1908, but the actual quantity imported does not show a very

great advance. At the moment, British gratitude in regard to trade matters takes the form rather of a lively sense of favours to come than any undue elation at the progress so far made. But a start certainly has been made.

ACCORDING TO BERNARD SHAW, we learn from experience that men don't learn from experience. Those Canadians, few or many, who were caught in Wall Street's recent pranks, may now be inclined to subscribe to this near-philosophy. Home-keeping hearts have certainly been happiest during the past few weeks of stock exchange developments. The steadiness of the local market has been in encouraging contrast to New York's gyrating. Following such gross bull manipulation as brought the collapse in Rock Island and in Hocking Coal, there was, this week, almost as patent a display of bear tactics. On Tuesday, prices of wheat, corn, cotton, oats, pork and stocks declined at the same time. The day's stock market collapse was apparently aggravated by the efforts of strong pools to get back stocks distributed at higher levels. With bear coverings came somewhat of a rally. But whether its day-to-day changes be up or down, Wall Street's movements just now bear every mark of artificiality.

The year 1909 was characterized by too rapid and too extreme an advance in the Wall Street price level. At the extreme low level this week, quotations of leading stocks were 10 to 15 points below the high prices of the past year.

Industrially, recovery continues across the border—the week's dividend increase on Steel Common is cited as an indication. But the rising trend in commodity prices and the disappointing export showings of recent months are not encouraging features in the general business situation there.

To Canada, with its relatively greater dependence upon agriculture, high prices for foodstuffs tend to stimulate general trade—though the increasing "cost of living" bears hardly enough on many. In which connection, however, there comes to mind Mr. J. J. Hill's remark that the cost of high living is to be largely blamed for the high cost of living. The lower prices that are said to have resulted from the "meat boycott" in Pittsburg and other industrial centres, prove nothing more than that demand as well as supply is still a factor in fixing values.