

If prices had remained in 1892 exactly as they were in 1891, there would have been an increase in the value of imports of \$10,753,000 brought about by a corresponding increase in volume, but this increase in volume was offset by a decline in prices, to the extent of \$7,119,000, so that the actual increase only amounted to \$3,633,819.

The following summary, which perhaps sets off results to better advantage, shows that while the year 1892 was marked by a decided increase in the volume of our import trade, there was an almost universal decline in price, and consequently a narrower margin for profit:—

SUMMARY OF IMPORTS IN 1892 COMPARED WITH THOSE IN 1891.

ARTICLES.	MORE OR LESS THAN 1891.			
	Value Imported 1892.	Quantity.	Price.	Together.
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Food and drinks	24,241,082 +	3,633,000 —	669,000 +	2,964,473
Metals	3,955,206 —	19,000 —	589,000 —	307,805
Chemicals, dye stuffs, etc.	3,701,588 +	228,000 —	37,000 +	190,621
Oils	1,540,581 —	31,000 —	208,000 —	238,653
Raw materials	23,505,174 +	2,541,000 —	2,541,000 +	6
Manufactures	52,808,564 +	3,706,000 —	2,746,000 +	959,402
Animals	618,576 —	158,000 +	66,000 —	91,856
Miscellaneous articles	6,608,172 +	860,000 —	378,000 +	481,733
Total	116,978,943 +	10,753,000 —	7,119,000 +	3,633,819

The information to be obtained by this method of calculation when the figures of one year are compared with those of another, is illustrated by the following comparison between 1891 and 1892:—

	1891.	1892.
Actual value of imports	\$113,345,124	\$116,978,943
Value at prices of previous year	111,923,000	124,098,000
Variation, from price	+ 1,422,000	— 7,119,000
“ quantities	— 842,000	+ 10,753,000
Actual difference in value	+ 579,540	+ 3,633,819

Thus it is seen that the increase in 1891 was due entirely to an advance in prices, as there was actually a decrease in the volume of trade, while in 1892, on the other hand, the increase was due to a large increase in volume in the face of a very severe fall in price.

THE FRENCH TREATY TO BE RATIFIED.

Canada's latest effort in treaty making cannot be said to be a brilliant success. The Government made a treaty with France in the dark, without knowing what it was doing. When its handiwork, in the form of a treaty, settled and signed, came before it as a revelation, it recoiled, hesitated, and during a whole session of Parliament refused ratification. Every member of the Government gazed on the treaty with surprise, dashed with consternation in the case of some of them, especially the Minister of Finance. After the session of the Canadian Parliament had closed, a mysterious cablegram came from Paris, intimating that Sir John Thompson and Sir Charles Tupper had had an interview with the deputy chiefs of the French Government, with whom the treaty had been arranged, and they became convinced that Sir Charles Tupper's view of the meaning of the treaty was the correct one. What does this mean? What does it portend? Nobody had suggested that the meaning of the treaty was at all doubtful, except in the item of soap. What was plain was that Sir Charles Tupper had gone directly contrary to his instructions, on the item of the most favored nation. If the negotia-

tor set up any other contention, it would be contrary to the fact as recorded in the official correspondence. Following this announcement comes another, at the interval of a day or two, that, after all, the Canadian Government had made up its mind to submit the treaty to Parliament, next session, for ratification. This change of front, being unexplained, is far more mysterious than was the hesitation to accept a treaty which, in the language of Mr. Foster, did not express the intention of the Government.

What is plain is that the Government has changed its mind. There may have been good reasons for it doing so; the difficulty is to know for certain what the reason was. However this may be the treaty belongs to the category known as unequal. The most favored nation treatment is secured to France, to an unlimited extent; to Canada it is secured no further than the narrow limits of the enumerated articles extend. The grounds of the objection which our Government first took to the inequality, still subsist in full force, though the Government has seen reason not to persist in making them an obstacle to ratification. The reasons which induced it to do so may or may not be sufficient to justify the change of front. Of this it is impossible to judge until we know what they are.

That the treaty will be mutually beneficial to the two countries which it affects may be taken for granted; though Canada has made some concessions which require strong reasons for their justification. The reduction of the duty on champagne is a policy which, apart from the necessity of giving equivalents in an international arrangement, would not recommend itself to public acceptance. But it is part of the price which we pay for concessions in our favor. In such cases it is generally impossible to say which party gets the best of it, on the whole; when both are benefited, both have reason to be satisfied. The unequal nature of this treaty, in the particular pointed out, is a feature which prevents the instrument being regarded as a model, or even as one which will bear repetition. For this reason it is not likely to become popular; tolerance rather than welcome is the feeling with which it was greeted, when its contents became known, even by those responsible for its creation. The delay had the effect of causing the leader of the Opposition to express the opinion that ratification was a duty; we may therefore expect that the acceptance of the treaty by Parliament will be nearly unanimous.

There are two classes of producers in Canada whom the treaty will not affect favorably: soap makers and vintners, with the grape industry on which the wine manufacturer depends. The vintners alone have been heard in protest, and it remains to be seen whether their protest will go for nothing. They did not ask that the treaty should not be ratified, but that they should get an equivalent for the change, so far as it would injuriously affect them. That equivalent they asked to have put in the form of free spirits for fortifying their wines up to the keeping strength. This would place them on a level with French wine makers, in this particular, but in this particular only. French wine will still be subject to a duty, while ours is free; this favor may be thought to balance the advantage of free spirits which the French vintners enjoy, and if it should be shown to be less than a full equivalent there is the right exercised by our wine makers of obtaining alcohol, for purposes of fortification, from grape sugar. Alcoholic additions, unless they consist of duty paid spirits, must sooner or later be confined to some specific limit, such as is fixed for imported wines; in neither case could the limit of 26 per cent. of alcohol, according to Sykes' hydrometer, be exceeded without interfering with the duties drawn from spirits. All countries, with few, if any exceptions, graduate the duties to a scale determined by the alcoholic strength. This rule is abandoned by the present treaty when it permits sparkling wines to be entered at a fixed duty, without regard to strength. The same rule applies to still French wines, it is true, but only the sparkling wines exceed the alcoholic strength of 26 per cent. Practically the exception will operate in a limited area, since champagnes are too costly to come into general use. If we were making a treaty with Spain we could not well exceed this limit of 26 per cent. alcohol, for most of the wines