the figures of the half year show imports valued at £235,-995,751, and exports of £112,508,179 in value, the former being an increase of 4.7 per cent., and the latter a decrease of 2.8 p r cent. Since Great Britain is the principal market of both Canada and the United States, it is but natural that an increase in the value of the exports of these countries should be followed by an increase in British imports. The phenomenal rise in the value of breadstuffs and large exports of both wheat and flour from Canada to the Mother Country, is the main cause of the increase of $24,723,678 in the value of goods exported from the Dominion. The increase is due not to the exploitation of new markets, but rather to better values received in the old markets. An illustration of this is seen in the fact that Canadians received in the first six months of last year £351,579 for 1,018,100 cwts. of wheat, and for the same period this year £553,296 for 1,172,730 cwts. of wheat. The Canadian imports this year have apparently not been affected to any great extent by tariff changes. In spite of the realization of the full British preference on July 1st, the imports of staple commodities from the United Kingdom during the past six months have increased considerably. This is true of dry goods, the trade in which might have been expected to languish under the anticipation of lower duties. Of cottons, printed goods, jute goods, linens, woolens, carpets, haberdashery and millinery, the imports show a marked increase. As much cannot be said for the hardware and metal trades, imports of cast and wrought iron, hardware, railroad material, hoops and steel, tin plate and sheets, having fallen off.

The present arrangement of the Canadian custom's tariff, while not satisfactory to everyone—did a custom's tariff ever meet with universal approval?—does not appear to hamper trade unnecessarily. The action of the German Government in discriminating against Canadian products, may interfere with our exports to Germany; but it is the treatment which a fair trading country may expect. It is pleasing to know that Canadian shippers interested in exporting American goods are not affected by the new regulations. The Hamburg American Line having communicated with the German Government, has been advised that the signatures of the Montreal German Consul and Collector of Customs will be satisfactory evidence that the goods are from the United States, and that they will, consequently, be admitted under the preferential tariff. A speck on the horizon, which is causing anxiety in some quarters, is the coming conference between representatives of Canada and the United States at Quebec. Business interests have been too often in this country sacrificed to secure political ends; it is to be hoped the Canadian commissioners will treat any proposition that may be made as to the regulation of commerce between the two countries from a purely business standpoint, leaving aside politics and sentiment.

RETAILING DRY GOODS.

July and August are not, as a rule, the most interesting months for dry goods merchants. In towns or cities where a tourist trade is to be had, business is saved from the death-like stillness which exists elsewhere. How many merchants desert to the banks of the St. Lawrence or the cool lakes of Muskoka, and with an able lieutenant in command at home this is certainly a profitable way to spend the time of hot weather when a year's trading is taken into account? But the able lieutenant is an indispensable requisite of the holiday. Give him scope for the ingenuity which should be his qualification when selected for the place. Put him on his mettle, and if he is the right sort of man there will be no cause for regret.

To the merchant who is always awake and thoroughly conversant with the details of his business it may seem out of place to ask: " Are your windows washed frequently? " It is a little thing, but a matter that ought to be attended to. Look at the windows. It has been said that a fine display behind window panes that are dirty or semi-opaque with accumulations of dust suggest a beautiful painting in a cheap frame, with this difference, that in the latter instance the frame doesn't obscure the picture.

We referred last week to the sale of dress goods in shorter pieces. The country merchant is interested in this question as we have good reason to know. When the wholesale merchant cuts a piece of goods for the trade he must be reimbursed for his trouble, and the small retailer who carries a good selection must pay for it accordingly. The manufacturer, however, can afford to bear the small extra cost of making the shorter piece-lengths in catering for this trade. The big merchant's cause has been well advertised and everybody bows to his beck and call. It is well to remember that the bulk of the merchandise sold in this country passes through the hands of the small retailer.

The good wearing qualities of the Scotch cape, writes the Berlin correspondent of the Dry Goods Economist, secure it a long term of favor, which is again proved by this season's models. The only difference with last year's goods is that, beside softer toned blue-green plaids, the capes are in brighter shades. Even the sharp, and hardly artistic combination of yellow-brown with intensest red, which has been put on the Paris market so many seasons without attaining any great measure of success, is beginning to be seen here. This inclination for glaring colors shows itself in the new hat models as well as in capes.

It is interesting to note that the department store managers have catered to the busy man by placing their stocks of men's furnishings, in nine cases out of ten, near the entrance to the store.

THE UNITED STATES LOAN AND CURRENCY.

Mr. Matthew Marshall, the financial critic of the New York Sun, treats as a fiction the apparent fact that $90,000,000 of the new Government bonds will go to small investors and remain there. He states it as an undoubted fact that many of the subscribers for amounts of $500 are dummies for the banks, and that many of the real purchasers of small amounts will soon sell out at a profit of two or three per cent., and that the transferred bonds will become the basis for increased bank note circulation. If this be so, the confident statement of the Secretary of the Treasury that the banks will get none of the loan, must be interpreted by the rule of contraries. This leads to the consideration of a possible inflation of the currency. The facts as they stand are somewhat startling. In October, 1893, the Treasury Department estimated the total amount of the currency of all kinds at $1,701,939,-919; on the 1st of the present month the same authority put the amount at $1,843,435,749, making an increase in five years of $142,495,831, and [the means of] bank credits had in the same time increased $700,000,000. To these increases Mr. Marshall expects to see, as a result of the loan, an addition of $100,000,000 in bank notes. What will be done with all this currency and all these credits? All the usual ontlets for capital are full, and the difficulty is to find employment for these greatly increased resources. Will new fields be found in the new conquests abroad, which are either accomplished or in the near future?