

West Indies, now at a low ebb, could not fail to revive under the stimulus of free trade. The free admission of Canadian fish into the islands must tend to increase the trade; but the consuming capacity of the population has a limit that is soon reached. But the question is not altogether what Jamaica is now, but what she is capable of becoming. That a prejudice exists in the island against Canadian flour is certain, and practically the trade has now no existence; against flour from Boston the feeling is equally strong; flour obtained from Baltimore has full possession of the market. The prejudice against Canadian flour would not be overcome without some difficulty; but the opinion that it would survive any effort to get rid of it, is probably not well founded. The one thing necessary would be, to make northern flour retain its qualities in the southern climate; and that accomplished, the rest would follow. The wholesale trade with Halifax has suffered severely from the facilities of shipment which a steam service affords; the small dealers get their supplies in this way. When the trade was confined to sailing vessels, this could not be done; the low freight rates from New York have had a decided influence on the trade. There is no doubt that Nova Scotia would gain commercially by the proposed annexation; and what is a gain to one Province directly, must be a gain to the others indirectly. The suggestion whether reciprocity might not bring all the advantages which annexation would secure has been thrown out, and it is at least deserving of consideration.

The exports of the Island for 1882, in quantity and value, were:—

	Quantity.	Value.
Sugar.....	38,392 hhd.	£614,283
Rum.....	22,742 puc.	295,645
Coffee.....	66,238 cwt.	133,535
Pimento.....	76,022 cwt.	112,817
Dye Wood.....	34,532 tons.	103,034
Fruit.....		124,260
Tobacco and Cigars.....	104,581 lbs.	14,357

Of the exports £968,524 went to Great Britain, and £199,787 to Canada; to other countries, £105,243; the total being £1,540,058.

The total value of the imports was £1,321,962. Food, in one form or another, figured up to £484,554, and clothing, £400,601.

The political aspect of annexation is not alluring. In 1881, the population was 580,804, of whom only 14,432 were whites; the blacks form the vast majority, 444,186, and they will only work enough to supply the barest needs of existence. Their scale of living is low as the wages they are willing to take, about twenty-five cents a day, show they live in wretched huts, standing on four posts, with a straw roof supported by a few sticks. Their chief food is the yam, which they boil with a little cod-fish or herring. The food for an adult costs only a few shillings a week. There are 11,016 Coolies. Taxes are high, being equal to 17s. 6d. a head, for all purposes. Besides the direct taxes, customs duties are levied on the following articles:

	Cargo prices	Import Duty.
Beef, family per hf. bbl.	50 to 52s.	7s. 6d. half bbl.
Alwives, per bbl.	28 to 30s.	2s. 6d. bbl.
READ—		
Crackers, per bbl.	15 to 15s. 6d.	6s. 0d. 100 lbs
Pilot per bbl.		6s. 0d. 100 lbs.
BUTTER—		
Irish, per lb.	none	2d. lb.
American, per lb.	9d.	2d. lb.
French, per lb.		2d. lb.
Halifax, per lb.		2d. lb.

CANDLES—		
Tallow		0½d. lb.
Comp., per lb.		2d. lb.
CHEESE—		
English, per lb.		2p. lb.
American, per lb.	6d. to 7d.	
CODFISH—		
Trc., per 100 lbs.	24s.	3s. 6d. 100
Hox, per 100 lbs.	28s.	3s. 6d. 100
Corn, American per bag	8s.	4s. per bushel
Cornmeal, per bbl.	20s. to 21s.	2s. 0d. bbl.
Flour, bbl.	33s. to 34s.	8s. 0d. bbl.
HAM—		
English, per lb.	1s.	2d. bbl.
America, per lb.		2d. lb.
Herring, per bbl.	12s. to 24s.	2s. 6d. bbl.
La-d per lb.	6d.	0½ lb.
LUMBER—		
W. P., per 1,000 ft.	80s. to 100s.	9s. 0d. 1,000 ft.
P. P., per 1,000 ft.	90s. to 120s.	13s. 0d. 1,000 ft.
Spruce, per 1,000 ft.	70s. to 80s.	9s. 0d. 1,000 ft.
Mackeral, per bbl.	20s. to 54s.	4. 6d. bbl.
Oil Kerosene per case	11s. 6d. to 12s.	9d. gal.
Pork, Mess., per bbl.	94s. to 96s.	15s. 0d. bbl.
Pipes, per box	8s.	12½ per cent
Potatoes, per bbl.		free
Salmon, per bbl.	80s. to 90s.	10s. 6d. bbl.
SHINGLES—		
Cypress, per M.		6s. 0d. M.
do. dressed, per M.	50s. to 52s.	6s. 0d. M.
W. Cedar, per M.	10s. to 24s.	4s. 0d. M.
Sop, per box 20-6"	16s. 6d. to 17s.	5s. 6d. 100 lbs.
do. " 20-56 "	12s.	
TOBACCO—		
Leaf, per 100 lbs.	105s.	61. per lb.
Cavendish, per lb.	1s. 10d. to 2s.	1s. 0d. per lb.
Tongues, per hf. bbl.	54s.	7s. 6d. per hf. bbl.

EXPORT DUTIES.		
On every hoghead of sugar.....		5s. 9d.
" " puncheon of rum.....		4s. 8d.
" " tierce of coffee.....		6s. 0d.
Logwood and other dyewoods, lignumvitæ		
Ebony and Cocus wood per ton.....		1s.

Canada would have to consider whether, under annexation, she could raise from the island the revenue necessary to pay its expenditure. At present the amount is about \$2,500,000; though for merely local purposes, it ought to be possible considerably to reduce the expenditure.

Annexation would bring us a population which it is not desirable to have; the representatives of which could scarcely improve the general character of the House of Commons. It might be difficult to govern this population, which is ignorant and unused to representative institutions. Annexation might prove a perilous experiment, and it is one which ought not to be made, if at all, without a full consideration of all that it may involve.

#### IS STOREKEEPING EASY?

Many a man is carried away by the apparent ease of a shopkeeper's life, and by what he hears of the profits obtainable in a country store. It is plain sailing, he thinks, for, "all I have to do is to make from ten to fifty per cent. upon every thing I sell, and that I can surely do." Let us see whether this is so:—

A store-keeper buys a book for 75 cents and sells it for \$1; he makes 25 cents profit. But he cannot put that 25 cents in his pocket; he has to pay rent, taxes, clerk-hire, fuel, &c., out of his profit.

If he could sell fifty such books a day, representing a profit of \$12.50, he would make money over and above expenses, but he can sell only two, which means fifty cents profit. Take an article yielding a smaller per centage; say tobacco, at a profit of two cents per plug; how many plugs must he sell to pay for the fire which warms the feet of the loafers who surround his stove? But there is tea, says a sanguine critic; he can make 15 to 30 cents per pound on that. Ah, yes; he will have to sell a chest of it every week, to pay his rent, and it takes a great many two ounce packages and quarter pounds, and half pounds to make up a chest. Dry goods, we are reminded by another, pay good profits, and are universally sold. True, some dry goods

do pay a decent profit, even now-a-days, but grey and bleached cottons are hardly among them; all a country retailer would make in a year, off these, would not pay his taxes.

And so we might go on. Profits of 50 per cent. are rare; ten per cent. ones are more near the average, and unless the sum of these amounts to more than the running expenses of his shop, how is a shop-keeper to keep house and clothe his family? There are numbers of shop-keepers, in towns and cities, striving to make a living out of transactions whose aggregate profit will hardly pay pew-rent. And there are country dealers carrying a stock of \$2,000 to \$5,000. "To turn over" this stock once in a year, implies sales of \$6.50 per day in the one case, and, say \$16 per day in the other. An average profit of 20 per cent. on this, would yield daily, \$1.30 and \$3.20, respectively, out of which to pay for rent, fuel, light, household expenses and clothing! Suppose a livelier trade, turning over the stock twice a year, at a close profit. Then, 15 per cent. on \$10,000 per annum equals \$4.78 profit per day, to cover all the expenses of a business and a family establishment, interest, depreciation and bad debts. The man must be an economist who can lay by much out of even this performance. No; the life of a retail shop-keeper to-day, is not, as a rule, either an easy or a prosperous one, and it is a mistake to encourage ignorant experimenters in it. Wholesale men as well as retail, may study with advantage, such analyses as these.

#### TRUSTEES AND THEIR SOLICITORS.

Under the law at present in force in this Province, debtors, in insolvent or embarrassed circumstances, who are disposed to do so, are permitted to make an assignment to a trustee for the general benefit of all their creditors. That trustee is supposed to represent the creditors, and the assignment will be valid only in the event of its being shewn that the relation of trust has been established between the trustee and the creditors. Practically, however, the debtor who is able to get the concurrence of one or two creditors, may, and frequently does, select the party who shall act as trustee. Instances have occurred in this city, and in other places, where, in this way, not only has a friendly trustee been selected, but it has been thought proper afterwards, even although the debtor was seeking a settlement, that the same legal adviser should represent both the debtor and the trustee. If there is to be a settlement of an insolvent estate, the interest of the debtor is such that the settlement shall be as favorable to him as possible. The interest of the creditors may be stated to be exactly the opposite.

It is scarcely reasonable from a business standpoint, that the debtor and creditors representative should, under such circumstances, act through the same legal adviser, whether or not it may involve any breach of professional etiquette on the part of the solicitor. Certainly no such arrangement should ever be made without the distinct and unequivocal concurrence of those who are most interested in the result of liquidation, viz: the creditors.

It is incomprehensible that any trustee,