

reference to Mr. Patterson's assertion, that serious obstacles were interposed to trade with Canada by West Indian legislation. We denied that assertion on grounds fully stated, and Mr. Patterson has not ventured to reply to our statements. He now, however, attempts to apply our remarks to the import trade, and he brings to his assistance a letter from Mr. Solomon of Jamaica, who is styled "a leading sugar planter," but who candidly admits that there is in Jamaica a "lack of skilled labor or capital to refine." Mr. Patterson is, no doubt, aware that Jamaica, at one time the principal sugar colony of the West Indies, has fallen to the fourth grade; that with a population of 510,000, and nearly 7,000 square miles of territory, it produces only 25,000 tons of sugar, while Trinidad, with a population of little over 100,000, and 1,700 square miles of territory, produces 50,000 tons. If Mr. Patterson relies on the class of West India planters who frankly avow, as Mr. Solomon does, that they have neither capital nor skilled labor, we can only inform him that our reference has been exclusively to a class who have capital and skilled labor at command, and who are the influential people of the several colonies. Mr. Patterson is equally uncandid in all that he has stated regarding Sir A. T. Galt. Sir Francis Hincks pronounced no opinion on the policy of Sir A. T. Galt, beyond stating an historical fact, viz., that the Imperial Government had placed their veto on the policy which was recommended by the Canadian Government. Mr. Patterson, we observe, is still of opinion that some such policy could be inaugurated "without very seriously arousing the sensibilities of Downing street." We do not share that opinion. The Imperial Government will allow great latitude to the self-governing colonies such as Canada and Australia, but the Crown colonies are in a different position. For the legislation in those dependencies the Imperial Government is responsible to Parliament, and no such policy as that suggested by Mr. Patterson would be entertained for a moment. Mr. Patterson has taken some pains to disabuse the public of the impression that the Dominion Board of Trade had adopted his views. We can venture to assure him that Sir Francis Hincks will be quite ready, on his declaration to that effect, to withdraw his assertion that it had done so. We own that we fail to discover that the insinuation was "unworthy" or "perverse and unjust," still, as Mr. Patterson has come to the conclusion, no doubt after mature consideration, that it would "operate to the disparagement of that organization,"

(The Board of Trade) to be supposed to have endorsed his views, we hope most sincerely that they will be relieved altogether from the charge. In Mr. Patterson's summing-up of the present controversy he falls into the error which we noticed at the outset of attributing to Sir Francis Hincks a desire to forward the interests of "a small number of persons in one or two West India Colonies," at the expense of the interests of Canada. Now the "small number" are simply those who control the legislation of the colonies, as evidenced by representations extended over many years; and Sir Francis Hincks, we must repeat, has merely pointed out the difficulties to be encountered in the West Indies in carrying out a policy requiring their concurrence. We believe that, notwithstanding Mr. Patterson's sneer at statesmen being "mere political theorists who have studied the art of how-not-to-do-it," he on the present occasion has been proved to be the visionary theorist who, without the slightest practical knowledge of the subject which he has ventured to discuss, has, nevertheless, undertaken to instruct both the government and parliament "how to arrest the downward tendencies" "of the declining industries and decay-ing commerce of the country." We do not yield even to Mr. Patterson in our desire for the attainment of the object which he professes to have in view, but we fear very much that there is nothing practical in his suggestions.

HARDWARE TRADE OF 1876.

To review this trade for the past year so as to form correct deductions from the facts brought before us is attended with many difficulties, owing to the exceptional circumstances which have arisen here, as well as in the other countries from which we draw our supplies. The generally depressed state of trade in the Dominion must also be taken into consideration in drawing our conclusions. When trade is in its normal condition, statistics readily show the underlying causes of facts we have to comment on, but, in such times as we have been passing through, these become more complicated. Our readers must bear this in mind where we draw conclusions which do not, at first glance, seem to be borne out by the facts we place before them.

We subjoin a list of the imports of the principle articles in this trade imported here during the last three years:

| | 1874. | 1875. | 1876. |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Guns, rifles, fire arms, &c..... | \$ 36,929 | \$40,007 | \$26,127 |
| Iron and hardware (manufactured) ... | 1,874,738 | 1,437,337 | 780,006 |
| Brass in bars, rods or sheets..... | 10,706 | 9,952 | 5,312 |

| | | | |
|---|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| Wire in brass or copper..... | 16,246 | 7,337 | 6,814 |
| Copper in bars, rods, bolts or sheets.... | 64,323 | 30,068 | 44,504 |
| Copper, iron or brass tubes or piping..... | 159,274 | 151,640 | 126,957 |
| Iron at 5 per cent..... | 1,965,911 | 1,632,861 | 1,165,315 |
| Lead in sheets or pigs, and litharge..... | 113,430 | 147,483 | 100,868 |
| Steel, wrought or cast | 348,953 | 251,517 | 168,314 |
| Tin, in bars, block, pig or granulated... | 50,045 | 17,289 | 43,856 |
| Spuiler and zinc in sheets, blocks or pigs..... | 73,191 | 71,462 | 72,853 |
| Iron in pigs, bars, galvanized or scrap. | 422,449 | 531,536 | 391,939 |
| Yellow metal in bolts, bars, &c..... | 3,633 | | 1,023 |
| Railroad bars and frogs, chairs, &c.... | 1,966,610 | 2,915,44 | 1,219,351 |
| Total..... | \$7,165,799 | 7,295,215 | 4,256,319 |

Our readers will observe there has been a very great reduction in the amount imported during last year as contrasted with the two previous years. This decrease in value is very nearly 42 per cent.; but in view of the reduction in values that has taken place in most articles, amounting probably to an average of 12 or 13 per cent., it represents only a reduction of about 33 per cent. in quantity. A greater reduction is found in the item of manufactured iron and hardware, nearly 47 per cent.; and as that class of goods have not experienced such a heavy decline in price, it represents probably a decrease of 40 per cent. in quantity. The greatest falling off is in the article of railroad bars, etc. This shows 55 per cent. decrease on the preceding year's importations, which can be accounted for by a decline both in quantity and value.

The decrease in metals, or raw materials, is not so marked, and as these also have, in almost every case, experienced a decline in value, the falling off in quantity is not so serious as would at first appear.

While retrenchment and excessive caution in importing have been the leading characteristics of our principal importers last year, there have also been other causes at work which seemed a strict adherence to such a course. The failure of three large firms, one of them a very old established and respectable one, early in the year, threw a large quantity of general hardware stock on the market, and also led to the stoppage of several large retail dealers in various parts of the country. These stocks had to be absorbed at once by the general trade, and caused the more prudent and solvent firms to exercise extra precautions against over-importing. The result is plainly shown in the item of manufactured hardware.

The heavy reduction in the imports of railroad bars, etc., is not a matter of surprise, as after the stimulus to railway enterprise, which has been given the last few years, we could not but anticipate such a revulsion, which will probably be of some duration. We do not, however, fear any