Again, it is to be noted that, in respect of figures about nickel, the returns of Ontario product made to the Department of Trade and Commerce at Ottawa (under oath) differ by a hundred per cent. from the figures supplied by the same concerns (not under oath) to the Ontario Bureau. Hereby hangs a tale, which any reader will variously interpret according to his understanding of human nature as illustrated, say, in a certain passage in the 116th Psalm.

However, according to the table of mineral products on page 15, there was close upon four million dollars worth ($3,899,821) of metals and mineral substances taken out of Ontario earth in the year 1897, without considering missing returns of stone, lime and brick; gold shows an increased production over 1896, iron a decline, while on nickel and copper we shall not comment in view of what has already been said. Increases are shown in natural gas, gypsum, salt and paraffin wax, but a distinct decline in petroleum. Such structural materials as cement, terra cotta and sewer pipe show increased manufacture, but pressed brick and roofing tile exhibit the reverse. Gas and fuel oils and tar form considerable items. Calcium carbide, as a novel, but not unimportant product, appears in the list for the first time.

Ontario Mineral Product, 1897.		Quantity.	Value.
Cement, natural rock......	barrels	84,670	$76,123
Cement, Portland..........	"	96,825	170,302
Pressed brick, plain	number	7,148,908	53,727
Pressed brick, fancy	"	895 000	9,350
Roofing tile		35,0 0	400
Terra cotta.....................		.... .	35,800
Paving brick..................		4,567,880	45,670
Sewer pipe.....................		......	73,551
Petroleum........	imperial gallons	25,556,691	......
Illuminating oil ..	"	10,891,337	1,131,083
Lubricating oil....	"	1,959,810	199,755
Benzine and Naphtha	"	949,341	77,340
Gas and fuel oils and tar..........		8,021,633	281,035
Paraffin wax and candles	lb.	2,139,278	88,378
Natural gas		......	308,448
Calcium carbide............	tons.*	574	34,440
Salt	"	54,686	249,880
Gypsum and products of	"	1,729	17,950
Graphite and products of....	"	400	8,500
Iron	"	24,011	288,127
Nickel	"	1,999	359 651
Copper	"	2,750	200,067
Gold	oz.	11,412	190,244
Totals................	1897	....	3,899,821
	1896	....	3,794,003

*Net tons of 2,000 lbs.

LESS SMUGGLING.

We are glad to be told that the efforts recently made by Government to enforce the exaction of duties on goods purchased at retail in American cities by dwellers in Canadian frontier towns have resulted in a perceptible lessening of smuggling. At Windsor, for many months past, the complaint has been made by retail dealers that smuggling was ruining their trade. And that this was no empty complaint is shown by the recent failure of three retail concerns in that place. Nor were Windsor merchants the only sufferers. The retailers of Chatham complain that the special trips of boats to Detroit carry off their customers, and the retailers of Wallaceburg and Dresden have a like tale to tell of the effect of cheap fares to Detroit by boat and rail.

Regarding for a moment, on the other hand, the view of the consumer, who deems his or her liberty curtailed when demand is made for payment of duty on goods subject to our tariff, let us examine the administration of the customs law. It is said that favoritism is shown, that poor people are detained and searched, while the richer and more influential smuggle at will. This is clearly wrong and should be stopped. The idea of the law is to raise revenue from foreign goods, whether used by a high or a lower class of the people, and incidentally to protect the Canadian maker of such goods. If Mrs. Cholmondely is allowed to bring in duty free five dollar kid slippers bought in Detroit, while Mrs. Muggins is made to pay duty on two dollar boots, injustice is done, not only to Mrs. Muggins, but to the revenues of the country and the interest of the home manufacturer. On the American side of the line they are strict enough in customs examination, and we should not be less so.

THE RATE WAR AS AN ECONOMICAL EXPERIMENT.

If under the rate war, the railways have taken more money than when the higher peace rates were received, it does not follow that the business has been equally profitable to the companies. There may be something in the idea which has found expression, that the extra business under the lower carriage rates, is an anticipation of what would, under other circumstances, have come later, and that the process is an exhausting one; present increase to be followed by future decrease, as a natural result. But while this may be a partial explanation, the lower rates must have created travel which would otherwise not have existed. The experiment may be useful in tending to show how low economic rates may go, without a sacrifice of net revenue; though it is not likely to be continued long enough, or the rates to be sufficiently varied for the result to form a scientific basis for ascertaining the lowest rates that are possible without a sacrifice of revenue. The Austrian Government, by a lowering of rates on the State railways of Hungary, was successful in increasing the traffic, and the Governor of Iowa undertook to show that a state-enforced reduction of rates proved to be financially beneficial to the roads.

THE GENERAL CONDITION OF MEXICAN TRADE.

BY A CANADIAN, RESIDENT IN MEXICO.

Continued from issue of April 15th.

I now mention the chief imports into this country, and make no apology for the length of the list of articles which the Mexicans buy, for I feel that many of them can be and ought to be supplied from Canada:

IMPORTS.

Coal.—The demand for coal and coke is becoming greater every year in Mexico, one of the greatest drawbacks to the country being absence of native coal in paying quantities. In 1896 the coal imports exceeded those of 1895 by more than 50,000 tons; a large proportion of this excess coming from the United States. The shipment of American coal to Mexico in June, 1896, amounted to 16,480 tons, as against 32,691 tons in June, 1897. A government decree recently promulgated excepts from tonnage duties all vessels entering Mexican ports, carrying cargoes of coal exclusively, which is a point worthy of being borne in mind. The mines of Vancouver supply 45 per cent. of the coal consumption of the Pacific Coast of the United States. There seems to be no reason why the trade should not be extended to the Pacific ports of Mexico. Nova Scotia coal, shipped in sailing vessels (the mode of carriage usually adopted by the United States), could also supply the ports on the Gulf of Mexico. Coal by carloads, at the present time, ranges between $15 and $16 (Mexican), per ton, free on board cars at Mexico City. This is equal to $6.80 to $7.20 Canadian money, at the present rate of exchange. There is no duty on coal.

Wood.—The country is also deficient in wood. The importations of wood and manufactures of wood increased from $549,584, in 1895, to $2,054,483, in 1896. A large proportion of the increase consisted of sawed lumber for constructions. British Columbia sent, during 1896, telegraph poles to the ex-