

PRINCIPAL IMPORTS.

	Dec., 1896.	Dec., 1897.
Cottons, including cloths and thread	\$352,124	\$497,477
Cotton, waste and raw (free)	366,417	648,305
Fancy goods	96,831	94,697
Hats, caps and bonnets	31,375	31,826
Silk goods	102,543	135,788
Woolens, cloths, carpets, yarns, knit goods	353,910	476,440
Wool (free)	110,072	204,836
Furs and manufactures	17,287	20,482
Books and pamphlets	86,431	101,530
Breadstuffs, grain, flour and meal ..	83,882	85,705
Coal, bituminous	403,202	499,929
" anthracite (free)	333,059	418,436
Drugs and medicines	75,702	96,659
Earthenware	44,589	50,923
Metals and manufactures	26,832	46,393
" (free)	165,644	286,058
Iron and steel manufactures	584,387	874,786
Leather and manufactures	116,396	157,970
Oil and paints	138,021	153,479
India rubber and gutta percha	18,616	24,808
Provisions	53,613	84,297
Sugar	315,551	323,516

The exports of December, 1897, amounted to \$17,022,881, and of this amount \$14,977,002 was the value of produce of Canada. In December, 1896, \$11,156,145 was the value of the total exports and \$9,191,660 the value of the Canadian produce sent abroad. If the six months' trade in the fiscal year remaining unrecorded make as good a showing, 1896-97 will be a banner year in Canadian trade.

THE WOOLEN GOODS TRADE.

There has been an active movement in woolen goods during the past six months. The daily press asserted this week that the Almonte mills, which have been closed for some time, were again running on full time, but as a matter of fact they have been busily employed for months past. The "boom" in Canadian gold mining regions has been of considerable assistance to our woolen manufacturers. Several mills have turned their best energies to the preparation of "Mackinac" cloth, a blanket material which the lumbermen have been accustomed to use to make clothing. This cloth is being made by different mills, at Brantford, Toronto, Waterloo, and other centres of production.

The greater activity of trade does not appear to have affected Eastern Canada as it has the West. Reports from the Maritime Provinces differ in opinion as to the condition of trade, but on the whole it may be said no marked improvement has taken place. In Quebec business generally is on the mend, while Ontario conditions are much better than they were a year ago. The principal gains in the industry have been made, however, in the trade of Manitoba, the North-West Territories and British Columbia. The good wheat harvest, combined with the gold finds, has had the effect of extending the consumptive demand for manufactured products.

For the spring trade Canadian makers of tweeds have prepared an excellent range of goods. Green shades are, perhaps, first in popularity, while browns stand high in the opinion of salesmen as likely to be the "correct thing" next summer. In patterns, checks and stripes are both popular. The manufacturers have prepared different lines in the form of a single shade and three different patterns, which gives the retailer a wide range of selection. The mill agents are already beginning to talk of fall business, and are showing their samples to the wholesale houses. The patterns for the autumn are not unlike those for spring, but the shades are, as was to be expected, somewhat darker.

Whip cord cloth is as popular as ever and several new features shown this year will doubtless result in an increase in its consumption. For men's light overcoats a pattern with a herring-bone effect in brown and olive mixes has

taken well with the trade. A whip cord with a fancy back, thus obviating the need for lining, has a good appearance. In several cases the more expensive goods have been brought down to a popular price by economy in the manufacture of the back of the cloth.

There has been a decided tendency in the trade of late to follow the fashion in the United States and make cloths for men's and women's use more nearly alike, the result, no doubt, of the increased attention given to athletics and out-door exercise by women. A few cloths are shown which can be used for either sex, while in numerous instances, the only difference is that the cloth for women's garments has a softer back and is more pliable than that for men.

HALIFAX BOARD OF TRADE.

The annual meeting of the Halifax Board of Trade was held on Wednesday, January 19th, when an unusually large number of members were present. The president, Mr. G. J. Troop, occupied the chair. The annual report was read by Mr. Creed, the secretary, and after the reading of each clause, an opportunity was given anyone to make remarks. There was, however, but little discussion.

Many topics were dealt with in the report, which was very lengthy. First, as to the tariff, the regret was expressed that "the administration of the customs law, instead of being simplified, has of late become more complicated and more annoying to the importer." West India trade, the council also regretted, was most unsatisfactory and unprofitable during the past year, and the residents of those islands in a condition of despair. Canada does not do her share, it was pointed out, in supplying field produce to these islands, while the United States gets the bulk of the trade. The board had asked Government to send out Mr. J. A. Chipman, as commercial agent, but nothing had been done about it, and they think "the Upper Provinces, who would be the chief beneficiaries, have not supplemented our effort in this direction, and seem wholly indifferent to its importance." The action of Parliament in this West India trade connection is looked forward to with anxiety by the board.

Other subjects dealt with are marine insurance, the fast line service, the Provincial Exhibition, the Halifax and Guysboro Railway, the West India cable. As to the last, Mr. W. R. Pickford wanted the company asked to reduce the rate to Bermuda. The rate to Jamaica is 50 cents a word, and 75 to Bermuda. Mr. Wm. Roche spoke upon the reconstruction of Government works in the harbor, as to which the Haligonians are still living in hope. Dr. Farrell had something to say about the winter port. Then came the election of officers, which resulted as follows:

President—George Mitchell, M.P.P.

Vice-Presidents—W. A. Black and J. E. DeWolf.

Treasurer—H. G. Bauld.

Arbitrators—J. C. Mackintosh, A. M. Payne, H. G. Bauld, A. E. Jones, J. E. DeWolf, L. G. Power, I. Mathers, H. L. Chipman, J. A. Chipman, George E. Boak, Geoffrey Morrow, W. A. Black.

Auditors—George E. Faulkner and E. G. Kenny.

Council—George E. Boak, Geo. S. Campbell, H. L. Chipman, J. A. Chipman, M. Dwyer, Geo. E. Faulkner, E. Farrell, James Hall, J. H. Hugill, A. E. Jones, E. G. Kenney, I. H. Mathers, Jas. Morrow, A. Stephen, George Troop.

The mayor of the city, Mr. Stephen, moved, seconded by Mr. Roche, a vote of thanks to the retiring president for his untiring exertions on behalf of the commerce of the city. Mr. Mitchell, in putting the motion, paid a high tribute to the labors of Mr. Troop. The community owe him a debt of gratitude.

KENTVILLE BOARD OF TRADE.

On the evening of Monday, January 17th, the board of trade held its annual meeting at Kentville, Nova Scotia. Mr. M. G. DeWolfe was the retiring president, and his report gave a synopsis of the work done by the board in 1897. Among the subjects discussed had been sanitary matters, sewerage, tourist travel, better telegraphic accommodation, a town park, and fire insurance. The president repeated what he had said last year about the Maritime Board of Trade. That board, he thinks, is going to be a power in the Lower Provinces, and, made up as it is of the best elements of each province, and free from political influence, it can do effective work. Officers for the ensuing year were chosen as under: