

Thus the statement for the eight months goes to show that the indications for business during the current year are so far exceedingly good, and I see no reason why we should not look forward to a continuance of good business.

A feature which deserves a passing remark is the gratifying increase reported by the Department of the Interior with regard to the immigration. Not only from the old country is there a moderate increase, but a new feature has been introduced of late in the very large increase of immigration from the United States. Some portion of this, no doubt, is made up of Canadians coming back, while the others are people who have been settled in the United States for years and who are now coming across the line. I need hardly say that they are the most desirable class of immigrants, and we ought to feel pleased that so many are casting in their lot with us. From the returns of immigration, from the returns of homestead entries, from the returns of sales of land by the railway companies, from the recent announcement that the price is advancing of private lands throughout the North-west, we are led to the conclusion that, at last, the great work of filling up the North-west has begun in earnest. There is reason to believe that we may look forward to a splendid development of that great territory during the next few years.

There has been much discussion of late about the operation of our tariff as respects imports from Great Britain and the United States. Leaving out of consideration the question of free goods, it has been represented that on the dutiable goods imported the average rate of duty has actually been higher on British goods than on American. This statement of the average duties, even if correct, may be so presented as to be somewhat misleading. If you buy from England a quantity of fine goods on which the duties are considerable, and from the United States a quantity of goods of another class on which the duties are low, you may strike an average which will seem to show that the duties on British goods are higher. But if the comparison be made of the duties in any one class of goods, the result will be quite different. No figures of this kind respecting averages can shut out from view the simple fact that there are no duties on British goods higher than on American, and that with the exception of a few articles which are excluded from the preference the duties on all British imports are just one-third less than on similar goods from the United States. As a matter of fact, however, the statements respecting the levying of higher average duties on British than on American dutiable imports appear to be inaccurate. By referring to the Trade and Commerce Report (part 1, page 15) it will be found that the average rate of duty on British dutiable goods last year was 24·74, while the average rate on American dutiable goods was 24·83. The frac-

tional difference, therefore, was in favour of Great Britain. Practically, however, on the business of last year the two average rates were the same. How does this compare with previous conditions? One would assume from some of the criticisms that have been offered that the previous tariff bore more lightly on British as compared with American goods. But what are the facts? In the year 1896, under the tariff of the late government, the average duty on dutiable imports from the United States was 26·60. In the same year the average duty on British dutiable imports was 30·20, showing a difference against Great Britain of nearly 4 per cent. Thus, even taking the averages, it will be seen that under the operation of our tariff a discrimination of about 4 per cent against Great Britain has been wiped out, until now there is a small difference in favour of Great Britain. But a closer examination shows still more clearly how the present tariff has operated favourably to British trade. The British preference does not apply to all goods. By general consent it has been deemed well to exclude certain articles such as wines, spirits and tobacco from the benefit of the preference. Leaving out these non-preference articles and comparing imports of British dutiable goods with imports of American dutiable goods—that is to say, taking into consideration all the articles to which the British preference applies—I find that while the average duty on American goods is over 24½ per cent, the average duty on British goods is only a shade above 21 per cent.

If any importance is to be attached to this question of the relative duty on British and American dutiable goods, it is well that we should have the facts and figures clearly stated.

As bearing upon this question, I desire to draw attention to the figures with regard to our increased trade with Great Britain. It is not quite clear to me, by the way, whether some of my hon. friends opposite regard an increase of trade with Great Britain as desirable or not. Therefore, the application of these figures is somewhat difficult. Some hon. gentlemen profess to view an increase of trade with Great Britain favourably, while others think we ought not to buy so much from Great Britain. However that may be, it is undoubtedly the case that we expected that our trade with Great Britain would be increased under the preferential tariff. I have here the figures showing the imports:

Trade with Great Britain. Imports for consumption—merchandise only, dutiable and free.	
1895.....	\$31,059,332
1896.....	32,324,505
1897.....	29,401,188
1898.....	32,343,461
1899.....	36,931,323
1900.....	44,279,953
1901.....	42,819,995