

statement for 1880, we would like the Customs Department to furnish one for 1881.

It is worthy of notice that the average percentage of duties is much the same in the two years. With regard to the large increase noticed by the *Free Press* in 1881, we are inclined to think that it is much exaggerated. It will be recollected that Sir Leonard Tilley stated that a very considerable amount of duty was paid in 1879 in anticipation of the new tariff. It is of course quite impossible to form any reliable estimate of the amount of such payments, but there can be no doubt that if they were added to the year to which they properly belonged, there would be no such discrepancy as that to which the *Free Press* refers. The changes in the duties render it rather difficult to estimate with any precision their effect upon the imports, but there can be no doubt that there are many articles which in 1877 and 1878 were admitted duty free which were in 1880 subject to duty, and yet in 1877 the value of dutiable goods was nearly \$61,000,000, while in 1880 it was little over \$54,000,000. The free goods in 1877 were \$33,206,434, while in 1880 they were \$15,717,575, in both years exclusive of coin and bullion. It must, however, be borne in mind that formerly agricultural products imported for export appeared in the free list, whereas now, being shipped in bond, they do not appear as free imports. It is likewise worthy of notice that cotton and sheeps wool, both free, have been imported in excess of former years. In 1878 there were 7,243,413 lbs. of cotton wool imported, value \$774,403; in 1879, 9,720,708 lbs., value \$984,047; in 1880, 13,237,168 lbs., value \$1,496,024. The imports of sheeps wool were in 1878, 6,230,084 lbs., value \$1,106,210; in 1879, 4,976,758 lbs., value \$841,173; in 1880, 7,870,118 lbs., value \$1,684,761. We shall revert to this subject when we get reliable statistics for 1881, but we have thought it desirable not to let those which have emanated from the *Free Press* pass without calling attention to their incorrectness.

RECIPROCITY WITH FRANCE.

La Minerve has honored us with another notice of our recent exposure of the unhandsome treatment which Canada has received from France, but we find no attempt whatever to reply to our arguments. Reference is made to an article in the Toronto *Monetary Times* of 12th August which does not appear to us to help the advocates of France in its commercial war against Canada, and chiefly against French Canada. The *Monetary*

Times admits that, by the reduction of the duty on ships in the general tariff, France "has ceded the point which perhaps above all others Canada was anxious to gain." It further acknowledges, what we have no doubt would be confirmed by Sir Alexander Galt, that "for neither wheat nor cattle should we be likely to obtain advantages," and then suggests that "our forests would seem to offer suitable materials for exchange." We have never argued that if France should be willing to give Canada a *bona fide* preference in her markets, or even to reduce her duty on a Canadian staple without a preference, it would be inexpedient to make an effort to meet her. We are not aware whether there is any difference in the French timber duties in the general and conventional tariffs, but we know that the exports of Sweden and Norway, the latter of which countries would be Canada's chief competitor in the products of the forest, are admitted into France under the "most favored nation" clause in their treaty. The *Monetary Times* has fallen into an error, though, under existing circumstances, not one of much importance, in stating that we would have had England only as a competitor, if ships built in Canada had been admitted at a low duty under the Cobden treaty. All the nations having commercial treaties with France were able to send their ships at the low rate of duty under "the most favored nations" clause. As to products of the forest, we contend, as we have already done, that the special rate of duty fixed by the French general tariff is of little importance, so long as Canadian exports are admitted into France on the same terms as the most favored nations. Our objection is to two tariffs, and Canada being subjected to the highest one, unless she will make concessions. This question was not touched by the *Monetary Times*, and we have not failed to observe that there is a general reluctance to discuss it, as it is "a hard nut to crack."

Singularly enough we have been charged with entertaining unfriendly feelings towards French Canadians because we have protested against the injustice manifested by France to Canada. If any portion of the Canadian people have suffered more than another by the French policy it is that of the French race. Surely French Canadians were the chief sufferers by the policy adopted by France in admitting ships from nearly all European countries to entry at a much lower duty than those from Canada. Surely French Canadians are as much interested in the lumber trade as any other of our citizens. *La Minerve* indeed has admitted that

Quebec is the Province "*la plus intéressée*" in the commercial relations with France. We are ready at all times to protest against any injustice to Canada on the part of Great Britain, and we can find no reason why we should not equally protest against injustice from France.

La Minerve has cited some extracts from an article contributed to the *JOURNAL* in the year 1878, which it contends are inconsistent with those more recently published. While accepting the full responsibility for everything which appears in our columns, we cannot forbear remarking that the contribution in question was from the pen of a native of old France, who was well informed on the subject on which he wrote. The main point which *La Minerve* desires to establish is our admission that Canada should be able to make her own treaties. Now there is really nothing between us and our opponents on this question but a matter of form. We have repeatedly cited the precedents of the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854 and the subsequent negotiations by Senator Brown as affording proof that the Imperial Government will not only not object to Canada engaging in commercial treaties, but will lend its influence to assist her. As to the attacks made on the score of neglect in the Cobden treaty, it seems to us manifestly absurd that, so long as we claim the right to regulate our own duties, we can expect Great Britain unsolicited to undertake negotiations on our account. We have never seen it asserted that Canada applied to Great Britain to obtain a commercial treaty from France, and if she did not, the charge of neglect is unsustainable. There is no use in *La Minerve* trying to shirk the question. It is not disputed that Canada admits all French exports on the same terms as those of other nations. It is not denied that France levies differential duties against Canada. Has France a right to demand, under the foregoing circumstances, that Canada should reduce her duties on French exports in order to obtain merely the same privileges which are accorded to no less than ten European countries, including Turkey? We leave *La Minerve* to answer the question with or without the aid of the *Mail* and *Monetary Times*. Let our contemporary acknowledge frankly that France treats the Mahometans better than her own children.

In the *Minerve* of yesterday there is a suggestion that Mr. Chapleau may have been engaged in irregular negotiations with the French Government on more than one question. We wonder how Sir Alexander Galt will like such interference