

From this table it appears that though the price of coffee has not declined the consumption has increased 80 per cent., shewing at once an increased desire for coffee and a larger spending power in the community. This is probably a real increase in the consumption of the nation and not a transfer of taste; for cocoa and tea, the substitutes for coffee, have also been consumed in increased amounts, and there has been no such diminution of consumption of alcoholic drinks, for which coffee may be regarded as a substitute, as would set free such an amount of consuming power as would purchase the additional quantity of coffee. On the contrary, although the consumption of spirits has declined somewhat (13 per cent. since 1880), more is being spent on spirits to-day per head than in 1880. The price has increased 78 per cent., and had the consumption moved downwards at the same rate as the price moved upwards, the quantity used in 1896 should have been 44 per cent. less than in 1880. The decrease, instead of shewing a diminution of consumption power, indicates either an increase of money to spend or a growing desire on the part of the people for spirits such as would lead them to transfer their taste to alcohol from some other article. In face of the temperance sentiment of the country, it is improbable that the desire has increased, and we may safely conclude that the relation between consumption and prices of spirits indicates increased consumption power. The slight increase in the consumption of tobacco (11 per cent.), in spite of a rise in price, points to the same conclusion, viz, that the nation is growing more prosperous and has a larger income to expend. On the other hand, the increased consumption of tea and sugar justify no such conclusion. They, of course, indicate a higher level of general well-being, but not an increased consumption power on the part of the community. They afford no evidence against such an increase of income; they simply do not afford any evidence in its favor. The consumption of sugar has increased almost in the same rates as the price has declined. The consumption of 1895 has risen 168 per cent.; the price has declined (1895 price) 62 per cent. The consumption has risen just 5 per cent. more than the decline of