

increasing in wealth or decreasing in riches.

It is thus clear to be seen that the government of Canada may annually pay all its current expenses from annual revenue, and yet it can be possible for us, as a people, to all become individually poorer every year, that the average wealth of each individual in Canada in 1860, may have been, say \$100, and in 1863, only \$90. We give that relative proportion from the fact that during the past three years we have incurred a *commercial debt* of \$30,000,000 or \$10 a head for every man, woman and child in Canada, over and above all previous liabilities, either of the government or of the people. The increase in and magnitude of our national debt is bad enough, but the continual increase and magnitude of our *commercial debt* is incomparably worse. The government debt increases only a few hundred thousand dollars a year, while our commercial debt is running up at the rate of over \$10,000,000 a year as shown in the government statistics. We imported in 1861 and 1862, \$21,537,136 more than we exported, and there is no doubt but the imports for 1863,—the returns are not yet to hand,—will exceed our exports by at least \$10,000,000, for in 1862 the excess was over \$15,000,000. The annual increase of our government debt,—which increase we decidedly object to,—placed along side of those figures is to look upon a mere bagatelle.

With those ideas and facts before our minds, it is certainly necessary for us to review our commercial operations during the past few years, and endeavour to ascertain thereby what our prospects are for the future. To be forewarned is to the wise to be forearmed.

During the four years ending with 1856, we imported \$44,945,348 more than we exported. By adding to our exports all the capital brought into

the country for railroads and public works, we were enabled to pay off that heavy balance against us; and although drained of all our money, we were, at the end of 1856, commercially sound, were reasonably free from debt.

From that time we date a new period; and to start with, we find that in 1857 we imported \$12,423,974 more than we exported; that our export of wheat fell off one-half from the previous year, or, in round numbers, from nine to six millions of bushels; as we had no spare money before that year's increase of debt and decrease of exports, money began to be very scarce.

In 1858, we imported \$5,595,918 more than we exported, and we were deficient in our export of wheat, as compared with 1857, nearly one million of bushels more. Thus, in two years, our commercial debt increased \$18,019,892, and that during a rapid decrease in our annual available assets, for we exported \$5,040,392 less in 1857 than in 1856, and \$9,574,417 less in 1858 than in 1856. The result was, that many hitherto prosperous business men could not collect the monies due them to pay their liabilities; there was not money in the country, consequently every body suffered, and very many were utterly ruined. We have given above, statistics which clearly show that the scarcity was caused by over-importations, for the payment of which all the money that could be scraped together was shipped off to the United States and Britain. In the face of these facts, which every importer, at least, should always be well posted in, we find that the following year of 1859, we again imported \$8,788,180 more than we exported, to be added to the previous deficiencies, and that our exports again fell short of those of 1856 by \$8,280,035. The fruits of that over-importation of \$26,708,072, in three years, into a country previ-