

237. The following figures, showing the course of the average prices of certain articles, were given by Mr. Sauerbeck in the "Statist" of 17th January, 1891 :—

	Average prices, 1873-1890.
1867-1877	100
1873	111
1879	83
1880	88
1881	85
1882	84
1883	82
1884	76
1885	72
1886	69
1887	68
1888	70
1889	72
1890	72

Prices, it will be seen, have slightly improved since 1887, and in 1889 and 1890 have apparently remained the same; but as a very close calculation would have made 1889 slightly over and 1890 slightly under 72, prices have in reality declined about half a point during the past year. The year 1887 closed a period in which prices reached their lowest level, and it seems quite possible that a period of gradually improving and firmer prices has begun. Mr. Sauerbeck considers the supply of gold and silver quite adequate for the requirements of the increased population and trade and does not anticipate, for the present, any disturbing influence on prices, provided that no alteration is made in the monetary laws.

238. The next table gives the value of imports, exports and duty collected, per head of population, and the value of goods entered for consumption, in each year since Confederation :—

Value of goods entered for consumption, duty collected etc.