

709. Only once since Confederation have the imports been exceeded by the exports, viz., in 1880, there having been, with that exception, a continual excess of imports, amounting on an average to \$20,062,650 annually, the excess of 1893 having been \$9,552,734 below the average. The effect of an excess of imports or exports upon the welfare of a country, and to what extent such excess may be significant of its condition, are questions upon which various opinions are held, and the discussion of which would not come within the scope of a work of this description.

710. The following tables give the value of the imports into Canada for home consumption from the principal countries, in each year since Confederation ; and for the purpose of comparison, the years are divided into periods of five, the total of each period being given :—