

Necessarily, some difficulties have been met in maintaining comparable statistics over the period shown in Table 1; one of the most serious of these arises from the different methods adopted in dealing with exports of foreign produce. Thus, the apparent shrinkage in exports of foreign produce since 1920 has been due to change of statistical method rather than to actual diminution in value or volume of such goods exported; beginning with 1920, re-exports of foreign products from bonded warehouses have not been included in Canadian trade statistics either as imports or as exports. Exports of foreign produce since 1920, therefore, have been composed of goods previously entered as imports for home consumption, which have been debited to Canada when imported and so should be credited to Canada when re-exported.

From 1868 to 1893 imports into Canada exceeded exports in every year except 1880 and 1881. For the next ten years, 1894-1903, exports exceeded imports. During the period of great expansion from 1904 to 1914, imports entered for consumption exceeded total exports in each year. This was the period during which external capital was being brought into the country to build up the productive equipment of Canada. Since that time, however, there has been an annual excess of exports except in the years 1920, 1929, 1930 and 1931, when there were heavy return movements of funds to Canada in the form of excesses of imports.

Throughout the statistics of external trade numerous other historical series are given, but since they show the history of special features such as trade with the United Kingdom, other British Empire countries and the United States; trade in certain commodities or groups of commodities, etc., they appear in the subsections dealing with those particular features of trade.

