

a million. Now, Sir, the hon. member for Winnipeg (Mr. Martin) made a very ingenious speech, in which he grappled with certain positions taken by the Finance Minister. Homer sometimes nods, and when you are dealing with figures you may be insensibly led to compare percentages; and the hon. member for Winnipeg took a fair point when he said to the Finance Minister "You have argued from percentages, and now I will argue from percentages," and he tried to make out that the progress from 1868 to 1878 was greater than the progress from 1878 to the present time. He takes, for instance, the savings of the people. Let me say you cannot show the relative progress by comparing percentages if you ignore the basic figures from which you start. A man may read off percentages by the yard, and he will make an impression on an ignorant mind; but you "queer" his position at once the moment you ask him to give the basic figure from which he starts his comparison. It is an old fallacy, and it can be illustrated thus: Suppose you compare the progress of a city with 100,000 inhabitants with the progress of a village which commences with two inhabitants. Add two to the population of the village and it increases 100 per cent; add 5,000 to the population of the city, and it increases only 5 per cent; add two more to the village, and it increases 50 per cent more; and so on. Therefore, the hon. gentleman's argument was not valid; it was an *argumentum ad hominem*, and the hon. gentleman admitted it. There was also an error in his statement of the savings of the people, taken from the Year-Book: he has to go to another page to get the exact savings of the people. He tried to prove that between 1868 and 1878 there was a greater percentage of savings; but all you have to do is to take the exact figures, and you see that whereas things were in a languishing state from 1873 to 1878, there was great progress from 1873 to wards, until at present there are vast sums to the credit of the people in the savings banks and elsewhere. What did the hon. gentleman do further? He made an ingenious argument, and I compliment him upon it. Probably it may have been characteristic, but it was too clever by half. What does he do? He takes not the duties, but the percentage of revenue got by the Conservative Government in certain years, and he says, "If we could have taken the same percentage of revenue in 1875, instead of my hon. friend from South Oxford having had a surplus of \$800,000, he would have had a surplus of \$8,000,000." He arrives at this conclusion by taking the percentage of duty of 1894 and applying it to the total value of goods, both dutiable and free, entered for consumption in 1874. Now, where is the fallacy here? It assumes that with a population of 3,750,000, with a higher tariff, with exports \$28,

000,000 less, with an output from factories of \$221,000,000 as against \$477,000,000 in 1894, the country would still have imported the quantity imported in 1874. It is quite absurd. If you had the present tariff and the same population and only the same amount of exports, it is morally certain that two things would have happened. You would not have had the purchasing power we have nor the need to go outside for the same quantity of goods. Therefore, the whole fabric of my hon. friend from Winnipeg tumbles down completely. In fact all the arguments used by the hon. member were ingenious but misleading and unsound. I paid some attention to his speech because it was more carefully prepared than those of others. He referred to the reduction in values of some \$8,000,000. Now, I have shown that there were twenty-six cases in the tariff of specific duties abandoned and the Finance Minister abandoned them in a falling market. That was a dangerous thing for the Finance Minister to do. It bears out what I said that the Budget was a daring thing. I characterized it as a bold Budget. He has paid the price of his boldness for the shrinkage in values would have made no difference in the amount of duty collected on these 26 articles, if the change had not been made from specific to ad valorem, because no matter how values shrink, if the specific duties remain, the Finance Minister gets his revenue. I have shown that in some 26 cases he abandoned the specific duty altogether and in some 16 or 17 he reduced the specific duty from a high to a low rate and so far as the \$8,000,000 shrinkage has been affected by the reductions in these items it would, of course, have had no existence had the specific duties remained. Let me just recur to the point I made a moment ago as to the progress in these deposits, which were elaborated upon so much by the hon. member for Winnipeg. The people's deposits amounted to:

In—	
1873	\$12,933,834
1874	14,021,270
1875	13,782,000
1876	13,563,347
1877	13,525,087
1878	14,128,185
1879	14,704,487

Then the deposits increased right along until 1894, they reached \$55,955,590. Yet my hon. friend would argue from percentages, forgetting the base figure from which he started, in order to show that there had been actually more progress between 1868 and 1878 in the savings of the people than between 1878 and 1894. If that increase between 1878 and 1894 is not a sign of increasing prosperity, it is very extraordinary. You will remember that so great an authority and a statesman of such vast experience as