

more. It is true seven years have come and gone since the hon. gentleman held the position which he now occupies. We know that in seven years every fibre of the human frame is said to be changed. Am I to understand—the hon. member for Cumberland (Mr. Tupper) can tell—that a moral as well as a physical revolution takes place in that time? Am I to understand that what was true in 1873 is false to-day? That what was a good reason for congratulation in 1873 would be a source of lamentation and mourning and woe to the Finance Minister now? That what was an admirable basis for his whole future financial policy in 1873 would be a delusion and a snare in 1880? There was one thing, however, that did not change. I had the honour of a seat in this House in 1873, and I recollect that when the remarks I have just read were delivered by the hon. the Minister of Finance, in his usual glowing style, the cheers of his followers were as loud when he boasted of an importation of \$125,000,000 as they were when this evening he announced that our imports had fallen to \$70,000,000. The hon. Minister of Finance and his supporters are well matched. There never was, I suppose, a Finance Minister who had such very accommodating followers, nor were there ever followers who had such a very accommodating Finance Minister. They remind me forcibly, Mr. Speaker, of the language of the Spanish courtiers in the old ballad of the Cid and his charger:

“Ne'er had they looked on horseman might to
yon knight come near,
Nor ever on a steed so meet for such gallant
cavalier.”

And if any of them take objection to my metaphor, I would most respectfully assure them that a horse is not the quadruped to which I would of my own special choice compare gentlemen who are persuaded that the best way to increase the wealth of the community is to treble their taxation. There is no doubt one important factor in our present prosperity, to which my hon. friend's characteristic modesty has prevented his making more than a passing allusion, but which I cannot allow to pass unnoticed. We all know he was good enough to make a progress

through the country last autumn in order to see how well his policy was promoting the welfare of the people. I desire to say that I entirely repudiate the view taken by some wicked editors, who likened the hon. Minister to a commercial traveller who had filled his customers' orders and was returning for further instructions. I commend his zeal, but I may have doubts whether that zeal was wholly according to knowledge. I may have doubt whether the best means of finding out how the policy actually worked was by means of a number of interviews with different manufacturers, lasting from three to thirty minutes, according to the political predilections of the parties. I may doubt whether the information gleaned was always as strictly accurate as might be desired. Let us put ourselves in the place of the manufacturer being interviewed. Here enters the hon. Minister of Finance with his pleasant manner, and his pocket full of sugar plums for all good little manufacturers, while behind, but visible in the shadow, is the stern visage of the hon. member for North Hastings (Mr. Bowell), with the Customs cat-o'-nine-tails, and all sorts of pains and penalties ready for those wretched infidels who might fail to acknowledge that there is but one Minister of the Interior, and that the Minister of Finance is his prophet. No doubt this was a state of things eminently likely to enable the Minister of Finance to discover the truth, and the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, but yet I am inclined to think that my hon. friend's simplicity and good nature have been somewhat imposed upon in the course of his peregrinations. It is on record that in former times, in the good old days of the Irish Church establishment, a certain prelate of that Church set out on a progress through his extensive diocese, mainly, I believe, with the view of ascertaining what progress his clergy had made in converting the members of another persuasion. It is also on record that in the course of his progress he came to a parish where the Protestant rector and the Roman Catholic priest lived on terms of great amity, although the rector's congregation consisted only of his own family, a clerk and a sexton. I am happy to say that in this difficult situation the genius of the