

we have heard from the minister in very recent times—we have been annexed to the United States by an Order in Council. Our railroads and our railroad services have been automatically twisted north and south by those who swore upon a hundred platforms that so far as they could they should never run any way except east and west. Well, if my hon. friend the Solicitor General and the Deputy Minister of Justice are right in their law—or, rather, I ought to say, if my hon. friend from Halifax is right in his law and the Order in Council lapses at the end of the war, I can only trust that the annexation will lapse then also.

I would not like to be in the position of the Minister of Finance on this question. He and I have had many good-natured bouts across this floor, and I do not think any one in the House has a greater admiration for many of his qualities than I have. But I must say that there is one of his qualities which I would not want to emulate, however much I might admire it. I have had far too little experience myself as a quick-change artist to envy his position at the present time. I cannot help recalling that only in the last session of Parliament my hon. friend delivered a speech one hour and three-quarters in duration—and that was quite a long speech, much longer than the Budget speech; one of his speeches upon which the member for Halifax could not have congratulated him on the quality of brevity—in which he gave the reasons why we should not have free wheat. What changes this war has brought about! I recall a special sentence in the first speech which my hon. friend delivered in this House. After having told us how his party had been put in power by the assembled and serried hordes of men behind him from the province of Ontario and how he had got the support of all classes in that province, he turned to us and said: "Would it not be the part of wisdom, the great province of Ontario having spoken in this way, for hon. gentlemen opposite to accept the verdict?" And now he himself, by an Order in Council, has torn the verdict to shreds and tatters. What changes, Mr. Speaker, this war has brought about! But I should be the last man to quarrel with the change, and here I offer my hearty congratulations to the minister. I hail with pleasure anything in the way of freer trade, come from where it may, and I offer the minister my hearty congratulations, as I do also upon

his increase of direct taxation announced in his Budget statement.

I know, in answer to the comments that I have been making, that it will be said by some hon. gentlemen opposite—they have already been saying it in the country—that this free wheat is a mere war measure, and they leave the people of Ontario to infer that it will disappear at the end of the war. The Minister of Finance and the Solicitor General do not feel disposed to take that course; and if they do not, I shall give them credit for courage and honesty; but the fact remains that hon. gentlemen opposite are saying on the public platforms now that this is a war measure, and the inference is that it will disappear after the war is over. Something of that meaning must have been in the mind of the Minister of Trade and Commerce at an interview he gave on the status of the change. He made one of those curious statements that only he is capable of producing, when he said: "This is removed from the realm of trade." When I read that statement, two thoughts occurred to me: the first was, if it was removed from the realm of trade, into what realm was it removed? I wondered whether it had gone into the realm of science or astronomy or some realm of that kind. The second was, that we are dealing in wheat with the United States, disloyal though that may be, especially in this time of war. The keystone of the arch, as my hon. friend from St. Antoine (Mr. Ames) said in the debate six years ago—I remember what he said because I followed his speech—is gone. We are dealing with the United States, but the Minister of Trade and Commerce says that this thing is removed from the realm of trade. Had he been here, I would have asked him what realm it has gone into. Then I would have gone on to ask him why a Minister of Trade and Commerce should rejoice in any act of the Government being removed from the realm of trade. To an ordinary man like myself, a Minister of Trade and Commerce ought to be a man whose endeavour is to promote trade, but the gentleman who holds the portfolio of Trade and Commerce at the present time might be better described as a minister to prevent trade. He went to the Antipodes and came back without paying expenses as the greatest commercial traveller in the world. On his way back he stopped off at Japan, but I do not know that our trade with Japan has increased by reason of his visit, and I do not