

somewhat unusual course I think, Sir, of considerably widening the range of the debate. I endeavoured, Sir, in the criticisms which I offered to that hon. gentleman's statements, to confine myself as closely as I could to the subject to which they were immediately related. The hon. gentleman with some warmth, at a time when he was aware the rules of the House precluded me from offering any rebuttal of the statements he made, took the somewhat unusual course of persistently widening the range of the debate. I do not intend, in availing myself of this opportunity to notice the statements which that hon. gentleman made on that occasion, to copy what I take to be his very bad example in that respect. I shall endeavor, Sir, not only to confine myself as closely as I can to the remarks he made on that occasion, but I shall endeavour to set the hon. gentleman a good example in another respect, and I trust exhibit less warmth than he did on that occasion. The hon. Minister of Finance took exception to the statement that I made with respect to the passages in the Speech from the Throne on the opening of Parliament last year and this year in reference to the trade of the country. I claimed that the statement contained in the speech with which Parliament was opened this session, that "the trade of Canada is sound," had fully justified the criticisms I had offered on the hon. gentleman's statement when a year before the attention of the country was drawn by the Speech from the Throne to the fact that commercial depression existed in Canada. Now, the hon. gentleman has replied to me, and he contended that he was right in having stated that there was commercial depression a year ago, and in having stated this year that the commercial depression has passed away, and the condition of the country is sound. I would like to ask the hon. gentleman if the cause he gave one year ago, which led him to make the statement that the commercial industries of the country were laboring under a considerable commercial depression, has passed away. I would like to ask, if the great lumbering interest is not more seriously depressed at this moment than it was then. But the ground I took then, and I take now is, that no temporary depression in any one commercial interest of the country, however important it may be, ought to be

made the subject of unfavorable comment by an hon. gentleman holding the high and important position of Minister of Finance. When the hon. gentleman has informed the House that in the great index of trade, the imports of the country, there has been a falling off of one million and a half of dollars in the first six months of the present fiscal year, he has taken away from himself any reason for giving a more favorable statement of the condition of the affairs at this time than he could have been justified in giving a year ago.

I pass over that point to the consideration of a more important question which was in dispute between the hon. gentleman and myself, and that was the question of the existence of a deficit for the fiscal year ending 1st July, 1874. The hon. gentleman has qualified very much the statements he addressed to the House last year, and also the statements he has, from time to time, made in relation to that matter; in fact I may say the hon. gentleman has given up the whole question in dispute. I say that by the admission made by the hon. gentleman a few evenings ago, he has virtually abandoned the whole ground which he previously held, and has admitted that the three millions of taxes which he asked this House to impose on the country a year ago were imposed, not to cover any deficit in the then current year, but was done in anticipation of the necessity for a larger amount of public money in the future. If the hon. gentleman had made that statement a year ago, it would have saved us a great deal of trouble. If he had admitted what was the fact, that the condition of Canada was not only most prosperous in every respect, but that the expenditure of the year would be amply covered by the revenue of the year, but that in view of future and ulterior liabilities—in view of increased expenditure which the Government intended to impose—more money would be required, it would, I say, have saved us a great deal of trouble. But although the hon. gentleman has qualified his statements he still made this statement: "I regret to state that the receipts of the current year will not be sufficient to meet the expenditure. It will therefore be necessary for you to consider the best means to be adopted of making good the anticipated deficiency." There is no reference there to increased expenditure, but