

a grave and serious injury to every interest involved—injury not merely to the individuals actually engaged at the time in particular branches of trade and commerce, but injury that is more wide-spread and lasting in its effects, because it destroys that sense of security without which it is impossible to carry on with safety any commercial, manufacturing, or industrial enterprise. (Hear, hear.) This, I think, will be the result of the changes which my hon. friend proposes—changes which will bring into effect a new system of taxation, and operate more or less injuriously upon every branch of industry, and all this, I say, for the sake of raising \$950,000 additional revenue, a part of which after all may, as he himself admits, not be required.

Mr WOOD—The hon member speaks for the city of Montreal, I suppose?

Hon Mr ROSE—I hope the hon gentleman and the House will not imagine that I speak here in the interest of any particular section, locality or class; and I can tell the hon gentleman that he is mistaken if he thinks he can prejudice the observations I shall make to the House by reflecting upon the constituency which I have the honour, I am afraid I might also say at this time the distinguished misfortune, to represent—(laughter)—I say misfortune, because there is no constituency in the Province which includes within it more important, more numerous and more conflicting interests, affected by these fiscal changes, and to each and all of which it is my duty to give faithful and impartial attention. (Hear, hear.) I shall endeavour, however, to discuss the propositions not only without reference to local considerations, but in no spirit of partizanship towards any special interest which may be affected by them.

Mr WOOD—I should like to know. (Loud cries of "Order.")

Hon Mr ROSE—I do not like to be interrupted under any circumstances, Mr Speaker, and especially where the House is called upon to deal in the gravest manner with some of the most important interests in the country. (Hear, hear.) I say again, Sir, that I have no special interest to promote, no local object to serve, and I trust my hon friend opposite, (Mr Wood) will find no reason, in the remarks which I shall make, to say that I am actuated by a motive so small as the desire to make the great interests of the country at large subservient to those of any locality or of any class. (Hear, hear.) I was about to say, Sir, that I need hardly point out to this House to what inconvenience and loss the country must necessarily be subjected by every change that is made in the tariff. It is a trite observation, but none the less true, that most parties, in any way connected with commercial or industrial pursuits, would rather have a bad commercial system in operation—even one which would, in some

degree, restrict and curtail their business—than be subjected to constant changes. And the reason of this is obvious: for what confidence can a merchant have, when he enters into the business arrangements of each year, if, in addition to the ordinary uncertainties and risks that are inseparable from commercial enterprises, he has reason to fear that he may be subjected to a change in the tariff at a moment when such change would prove most disastrous to him? With what security, I would ask by way of practical illustration, would a merchant at this day order a cargo of tea from China, a cargo of sugar from Manilla, or even Cuba, or a cargo of coffee from Rio Janeiro, if, in addition to the usual risks of trade from fluctuation in prices and other causes, he would find, when the cargo arrived here, six or twelve months hence, that a change of tariff had in the meantime vastly increased its cost to him, without in any way giving a corresponding increase to its merchantable value, because the market could be fully supplied by others at any day by an order sent to New York or Boston in the interval? (Hear, hear.) He can have no confidence, I say, that any enterprise in which he may embark will prove successful. These repeated changes in the fiscal policy of the country do more than anything else to prevent the expansion of foreign trade. It would be a waste of time to dwell more on so self-evident a proposition. If the Finance Minister could but see with his own eyes the state of confusion into which everything has been thrown, he would, I think, shrink from a prolongation of it, and doubly so from the repeated occurrences of so great a mischief. (Hear, hear.) Well, Sir, if that is true in reference to the merchant, it is doubly true in reference to the manufacturer. The merchant has but his stock in trade—the goods which he imports and which he may sell, though without a profit, after these changes take place; but the manufacturer, who, relying upon the permanence of the tariff, has invested his capital in machinery and buildings adapted only for his manufacture, cannot possibly take them away or dispose of them, and the change affects him to a far greater and more enduring extent than even the merchant. He cannot remove his machinery or his buildings, which represent the capital he has accumulated for the purpose of carrying on his operations elsewhere. If the public interests demand that there should be a change in the policy of the country, it ought to be made with the greatest possible consideration and delicacy—it ought to be made gradually, and with the utmost circumspection, prudence, and caution so as not ruinously or injuriously to affect existing interests (Hear, hear.) Do not let me be understood as blaming my hon. friend for having changed the views in regard to the commercial policy of the country, which he has held since