

mass of the people; but, in so doing, they cannot avoid, apparently, trampling upon some interests which they have no desire to treat in this manner. And if commercial men at present imagine that we have wantonly neglected their interests, and wantonly avoided giving them any relief in our power, I have only to state that it was impossible for any Government to give a more earnest, serious, dispassionate and prolonged consideration to their interests than they have done.

The hon. gentlemen opposite say that the course we have taken has placed them many years nearer to power than they were three weeks ago; and this expression seemed to give the hon. gentleman infinite pleasure, judging from the gusto with which he delivered it. Well, Sir, it was not necessary to affirm anything of that sort to keep up appearances; and I do not grudge the hon. gentleman any little satisfaction he may obtain by expressing such an opinion. Sir, I do not care if in the exercise of our duty to the country—for I believe that the Government ought to act in the interests of the great mass—this course brings the hon. gentleman nearer to power or not I do not want to retain power at the expense of principle. And if it be the only object of an Opposition or a political party to get several steps nearer to power, why, Sir, the hon. gentleman knows that some of us might have occupied such a position many years ago. I believe that we are firmer now than on the day when the Finance Minister announced the policy of the Government. The course we have pursued dissatisfies some of our own political friends in the House, whom I grieve to say are opposed to our policy; but nevertheless, although it may have alienated them in this or in anything else, we have pursued the only course open to us as a Government under the peculiar circumstances in which we were placed. I believe that it will commend itself to the House and country; and instead of bringing my hon. friends opposite several steps nearer to power—to that power for which they long so much, and which is ever on their lips—I am conscious that it removes them a great

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE.

many steps further from it than they were before; and if they attempt in this country to act in the interests of a class instead of in the interests of the whole people, the whole people will not, Sir, sustain those who support a partial principle.

Mr. MACDONALD (Centre Toronto)—I think I must, in justice to myself, detain the House for two or three minutes before a vote is taken. The resolution of the hon. gentleman from West Montreal is so worded that it must succeed in securing the votes of those who have the most opposite opinions. It propounds a principle without defining a rate, and therefore those hon. gentlemen who have the most opposite views may equally vote for it. I may state, however, that this juncture is not the time to amend the tariff. I listened with very great regret, (as many hon. gentlemen did in this House,) to the announcement made by the Finance Minister of his policy. I conceived that during the recess he should have patiently, prudently and carefully examined into those industries that were languishing, that he should have made provision for them, and be prepared to announce a policy that would meet with general approval. I was disappointed, and I am quite sure that others were disappointed, and yet I feel as others, must, that that policy having been announced that the changes in the tariff have, to a large extent, been discounted, that the spring trade being in the country now being commercial, a change now made might be most disastrous. I have listened to a great many speeches in this House attacking positions that were never raised, and assailing a policy that has never been suggested. I have heard attacks on the policy of a "Chinese Wall," nobody having proposed such a policy. I believe no one who advocated protection wished for anything unreasonable, or anything that would have been detrimental to the agricultural interests, or to any other interest in this country; but if carried out in the mild spirit as proposed would have been productive of the best results. While gentlemen on this side of the House have expressed their desire to foster