

SIGNATURES.

B. E. Walker, John L. Blaikie, W. D. Matthews, W. K. George, Z. A. Lash, W. T. White, G. T. Somers, Robt. S. Gourlay, Wm. Mortimer Clark, R. J. Christie, H. Blain, H. S. Strathy, L. Goldman, Geo. A. Somerville, W. Francis, James D. Allan, E. R. Wood, John C. Eaton.

My object, Mr. Speaker, in placing this resolution on 'Hansard,' is to convince the Finance Minister of the inaccuracy of the statement he made yesterday to the effect that the Conservative members of this House, supported by the Conservative press, were largely responsible for the annexation agitation throughout the country.

Motion agreed to, and House went into Committee of Ways and Means.

Mr. MICHAEL CLARK (Red Deer). Mr. Chairman, I need scarcely say to the House that it is somewhat of a relief to a nervous man to have come through the usual daily amount of guerilla warfare, which naturally will take the place of regular opposition methods, when you have an opposition without a tabulated policy, and demoralized largely by the strength and popularity of the policy of the government of the day. I am sure that I carry with me the consensus of opinion of the whole House when I express my personal gratification that the member for the St. Antoine division (Mr. Ames), has been able, after his serious illness, to take his position once more amongst us, and make his painstaking contributions to the study and exposition of public affairs. I should like to reciprocate the wish which that hon. gentleman gave expression to, when he said that we ought to approach this question of reciprocity in a spirit calm and non-partisan. If he were to ask us to be non-partisan in a resolution, I should be disposed to say reasonably non-partisan so far as the hon. member for St. Antoine is concerned. Now, I do not intend to devote very much attention to the details of the speech of my hon. friend, who very courteously informed me that he had to leave for New York at four o'clock this afternoon; and he, I am sure, will not think me guilty of a bad return for that courtesy in not referring to his speech in detail. There are, however, one or two points to which I would like to draw attention. The hon. member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Meighen), some little time ago, depicted myself as occupying a somewhat lone position in this House—as being a kind of Canadian Rosebery, ploughing my lonely furrow. Well, I am bound to say that there was an admission at the beginning of the speech of the hon. member for St. Antoine, that takes away a great deal of my feeling of loneliness to-day; because he said that protection to be of any use, must be protection all round, otherwise it became class legislation, and was doomed

Mr. ARMSTRONG.

to be destroyed. He saw, in what is going on now, the fall of the outworks, and he said the citadel would soon come down. Well, that is very consoling to a lone free-trader in a foreign land; for I should like to point out that we never have had protection all round in this country, and there never has been protection all round in any country upon earth. That is not the nature of the thing; that is not the object of it. The only object of protection is to give a minority the chance of protecting themselves at the expense of the majority. My hon. friend from St. Antoine, and I think, my hon. friend from Grenville (Mr. Reid), have indicated the opinion that the western farmers, when they understand this question, will not be so keenly in favour of reciprocity as they are supposed to be at the present time. These hon. gentlemen need not be alarmed. The western farmers have been studying this question for some time, and to a great deal of the speech of the hon. member for St. Antoine, I think I can furnish an answer which was placed in my hand to-day by Mr. Bower, the president of the Canadian Council of Agriculture, who allows me to use his name in saying that the United Farmers of Alberta, the Grain Growers of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and the Grange of Ontario are all unanimously in favour of reciprocity. The grain growers of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and the Grangers of Ontario are unanimously in favour of reciprocity.

Mr. BRADBURY. That is the political machine.

Mr. CLARK (Red Deer). Am I to understand that my hon. friend is opposed to reciprocity?

Mr. BRADBURY. Most undoubtedly, as you propose it.

Mr. CLARK (Red Deer). Then I can only say that there will be more lonely men than myself, if I understand anything of the opinion of the western farmers and the meaning of legislation such as this.

I have been frequently called a theorist on this question, and I suppose that my hon. friend from St. Antoine division of Montreal (Mr. Ames) is put forth as a man of affairs, who understands business, and who approaches the consideration of politics from the business standpoint. Well, in that connection I was surprised to hear him suggest, apparently seriously, the giving of a three cent per bushel bounty on the raising of wheat. In the west last year we raised in the neighbourhood of 100,000,000 bushels of wheat. Three cents per bushel bounty on that would amount to a trifle of \$3,000,000 bonus to begin with, and we have only begun cultivating wheat in the west. Does my hon. friend want this House seriously to believe that he and his