

feared? That, Sir, is the statement the hon. gentleman made to the House the other day as the chief reason for withdrawing from the Administration. Has that defect been corrected? Has the Prime Minister withdrawn from his position? Has another Premier been found? If not, then what reason have these hon. gentlemen for returning to the Administration now? The more this statement is examined the more it will be seen that it was a much more candid statement than the one read to the House by the Postmaster-General to-day. Does any hon. gentleman seriously entertain the opinion that these hon. gentlemen, with a majority of fifty behind them in this House, were afraid to meet this House and dreaded their inability to carry on the Government because a certain place in the Administration had not been filled up? The hon. gentleman says in effect: Mr. Angers retired from the Government some months ago; we pressed upon the Premier the propriety of filling that position; the Premier neglected to do so, and for that reason we withdrew from the Administration. Sir, that is not the statement these hon. gentlemen made a few days ago: that was not the reason they gave for their withdrawal from the Administration. They assigned wholly different reasons, and I say again that I have no doubt that the statement read by the hon. Minister of Finance was a more candid statement than the one that has been submitted to-day as a reason for the return of these hon. gentlemen to the Administration. The hon. gentleman spoke of misgivings as to the capacity of the Premier, which misgivings he found to be more than justified by a year's experience. Now, what has been done to strengthen the Government? What has transpired to induce the hon. gentleman to return to the office he held before or to induce his colleagues to join him? The hon. gentleman will not pretend to say that Sir Charles Tupper possesses ability so much superior to his son, the hon. gentleman's late colleague, that he is justified in going back again because one has gone out and the other has come in. The hon. gentleman did not point to the ex-Minister of Justice when he gave his reasons for returning. It was not by the withdrawal of the ex-Minister of Justice that he expected to strengthen the Administration. The defect in the Administration, according to his statement, was in its head; the Prime Minister was said to be incapable and must be got rid of. But these hon. gentlemen, without getting rid of the Prime Minister, fearing that their occupations might be gone, have returned and have consented to continue to serve under him. All the facts show that these hon. gentlemen sought to become tools in the hands of one man in order that they might be the destroyers of another. They have not succeeded. They may have got their friend into the Adminis-

tration, the man whom they hope will assist them in the elections; but they have not got rid of the man who they said was an incubus upon the Conservative party and the continuance of whose premiership would prove a disaster to the party. Sir, there was a time, I suppose, when the hon. gentlemen thought that when the brains were out of a Government, the Government would die; and the hon. gentleman retired, and his associates retired with him, and they thought the life of the Government would cease. But the Government did not die, and these hon. gentlemen have come back into the Administration again. Now, Sir, the hon. gentleman has spoken of exaggeration, and misrepresentation, and parody of the statement he read the other day to the House, in the speeches that were made by the leader of the Opposition and by the hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright). What did either hon. gentleman say with respect to the statement made by the hon. Minister of Finance, that is not borne out by the statement itself? Did he not say that the Prime Minister was incapable? Did he not say that he was utterly unfit for his post? Did he not say that unless he was got rid of it would be disastrous to the Conservative party in the coming elections? Is not all that set out in the statement which the hon. gentleman made? Are not those the reasons given by the hon. gentleman for retiring from the Administration? And the Prime Minister, this incapable man, this imbecile man, is still at the head of the Administration, and the hon. gentleman has come back to serve under him. That is the position which the hon. gentleman occupies at this moment. Why, Sir, the hon. Minister of Finance talks about standing for principle. The hon. gentleman talks platitudes, and they have not served him a good purpose on the present occasion. Some years ago, there was a church critic who said that his church was divided into three great schools—there were the platitudinarians, the latitudinarians, and the attitudinarians. Well, we have had in the speech made by the hon. gentleman on this occasion, the platitudinarians. The hon. gentleman has travelled over a great deal of ground, and has spoken of his devotion to principle. But he has said very little in defence of the reasons which he assigned the other day for retiring from the Government, and for returning, under circumstances which he led us to believe were such as to preclude his entering the Government again. Sir, let me say that the hon. gentleman in his speech spoke of his devotion to principle. What principle was he devoted to? He said, the constitutional principle of going out of a Government if the Prime Minister did not fill up at the moment a particular seat in the Administration. Now, Sir, I have pointed out before that the hon. Minister has entered the Govern-