

with that speech and connected with that resolution which I think we are bound to take into consideration in voting on this resolution. The first is that the hon. gentleman has expressed in connection with his resolution a limitation, which it was absolutely necessary he should concede, and which must be conceded as to every country, namely, that this resolution is not intended to be aimed, and the censures which the mover has expressed are not intended to be aimed at those who in public life receive from political admirers or for legitimate political purposes contributions or testimonials such as he has mentioned. But the hon. gentleman has asked the judgment of this House on this resolution and upon the principle of this resolution in the abstract and, apart from anything connected with the past, has asked this House, as being an entirely new House, to adopt and affirm not a new but a broad and general principle. If the resolution which the hon. member for South Oxford put forward contained half that his speech contained in reference to the past, half the insinuations which his speech contained in reference to the past, it would be necessary to ask this House, out of self-respect and out of justice to vote it down. But the hon. gentleman has declared that such is not his intention; that he invites the House simply to affirm the abstract principle contained in this resolution; he has, notwithstanding the objectionable features of his speech to which I have alluded, shown considerable restraint for him in commenting on transactions which he has stigmatized very severely, very vigorously, and very unjustly elsewhere and in times past. The hon. gentleman has likewise stated that the resolution is not proposed as a vote of want of confidence, notwithstanding that it is put forward to intercept us for the moment in going into Supply. Considering these circumstances, and apart altogether from the observations which I have commented on as being undue and, as I thought out of place, I have to say that, as regards the general principle of this resolution, accompanied as it is by the disclaimer of the hon. member for South Oxford, it is one which the House may, in my opinion, adopt, and as it is not put forward as a vote of want of confidence, so far as the Government is concerned, we are disposed to accept the resolution.

Mr. LAURIER. I congratulate the Minister of Justice upon what I conceive to be the very wise course he has now taken, but I still more congratulate the hon. member for South Oxford on the signal victory he has obtained. He has laid down a principle which has been long contended for on this side of the House, which has always been refused on the other side of the House, but which, at last, circumstances compel the Government to accept. While I congratulate the Minister of Justice on the attitude he has taken, it seems to me that his conduct would have been still more praiseworthy if he had accepted the amendment, not only in its terms, but also in the same spirit in which it was offered to the House by the hon. member for South Oxford. The hon. gentleman admits himself, to some extent, that every word of the speech made by the hon. member for South Oxford, with one or two exceptions, to which I will allude, is correct. Certainly, nothing whatever said by my hon. friend with respect to the testimonial given to Sir John A. Macdonald, by his

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friends, could be found fault with. Every word which he said will be endorsed, not only by his friends, but by his opponents as well. The testimonial to Sir John Macdonald, as was said by my friend (Sir Richard Cartwright), was conceived in a very proper and laudable spirit, at a critical time in his life, when his life was despaired of, and with a view of providing for his family, since he had not been able himself to provide for them. So far so good. The only thing, however, with which my hon. friend found fault in regard to what was done on that occasion by the friends of Sir John Macdonald, was that instead of it being done publicly, as it should have been done, it was done in secret. I assume, and I have no doubt, that at that time there was no intention on the part of those who started the movement, to conceal anything whatever; but at all events the circumstances that afterwards developed showed, that if the testimonial and everything that was done in connection with it had been done in open and broad day, certain facts which took place would not have taken place; certain contributions which then were offered would not have been accepted, because public opinion would have resented it. Of course in the matter of this testimonial, it is an act absolutely indifferent in itself. It may be wrong or it may be good, according to circumstances, but if such an act is done in the open light of day, then, Sir, it is the best prohibition that there can be against any wrong taking place, but, Sir, with regard to this testimonial, and the testimonial offered a few years afterwards to the late Minister of Public Works, the member for Three Rivers (Sir Hector Langevin), between them there is a marked distinction. The Minister of Justice said a moment ago in reference to the testimonial offered to the hon. Minister of Public Works, the member for Three Rivers, that that hon. gentleman did not know who were the subscribers. Sir, if he did not know, why did he not look at the list? If the hon. gentleman did not know, it was because he chose to remain ignorant of who were the names on the list, and if he chose to be ignorant of the names which were on that list, is it not because his moral sense told him that he might there find names of persons giving contributions, which should not be accepted at all? Is it not simply because his conscience told him that if he were to look at that list he would find there the names of men who were every day suppliants in his office for favours? That is the reason why the hon. Minister of Public Works did not choose to have a look at that list. If that is not the reason why did he choose to be blind on that matter? Then I call upon hon. gentlemen opposite to tell what is the reason, if there could be any good reason for it. Certainly there could be nothing, wrong in the admirers of a man in public life coming to his help and rescuing him; but it seems to me that the recipient of such favours would naturally be too glad to know who are the persons to whom he owes gratitude, and if he does not choose to know who are those to whom he owes gratitude, it must be because his moral sense tells him that he would find there names which would be a condemnation of his accepting such a testimonial. I may say this to the Minister of Justice: If the member for Three Rivers (Sir Hector Langevin), if the then Minister of Public Works, did not know who were the names of persons who subscribed to that testimonial, he was the only man in Canada