

in the world; that exactly under our lee, so far as Ontario is concerned, there lie along the great lakes from Chicago to Oswego and along the Atlantic sea-board from Boston to Baltimore, cluster upon cluster of great cities containing nearly 30,000,000 of people, probably among the wealthiest, most extravagant and richest consumers in existence. And after these things had been fully taught and committed to heart, they would have hidden the mistress of the school spank her charges and put them to bed, and afterwards to send them off to play at being Lieutenant-Governors, or counsellors of great corporations, or managers of banks, or heads of mercantile establishments, or salaried leaders of Oppositions, or any other occupation in which success might be obtained without the most elementary knowledge of the leading geographical or historical facts affecting their native country.

CONSUMER IN CLOSER TOUCH

Add to this that occupying as Canada does the northern half of the North Temperate zone, she will always be able to produce many articles of the finest sort and of better quality than can be obtained in the country to the south of us. Sir, these men tell us that Canada cannot compete. I would like to ask them whether in their opinion it is not more advantageous for the people of Canada to send their produce to a market barely 300 miles away than to one at a distance of 3,000 miles; whether it would not be for the benefit of our people to bring the producer in closer touch with the consumer and eliminate the middleman, whose charges, more especially in the English and European markets, must invariably absorb a large proportion of their legitimate profits. I may observe that I have at various times during the last fifty years discussed this question with English and American statesmen of the highest rank, that while there was a good deal of difference of opinion on other points, I never found one among them, much less among Canadian statesmen of every shade of politics, who did not admit that an exchange of natural products would be a very great advantage to Canada.

These gentlemen, sir, desire that we should stand aloof, that we should go our own way and the United States theirs. This is a very novel doctrine on their part. I remember Sir John Macdonald's chief war cry was "Reciprocity of trade or reciprocity of tariffs!" I need not tell you that a standing offer of reciprocity in natural products was for many years after 1878 the leading feature of his policy, and is recorded in our Statutes.

They want, forsooth, to have nothing to do with the United States. Why, sir, what has their whole policy been but a bad copy of that of the United States? What was their main argument for revising the tariff of 1878? Why, sir, it was simply this, that because the United States did this or that we must do the same. And now they tell us to stand apart! Sir, I tell them we could not if we would; I tell them that in spite of two reciprocally barbarous tariffs, as it is our trade with the United States exceeds that with all the rest of the world put together, Great Britain not excepted.