

Board of Trade of Montreal, but other Boards of Trade throughout the country had petitioned for this reduction of duties. The proposition (as we understood) was to reduce the present duties on sugar from 9s. and 12½ per cent. to 7s. and 12½ per cent by the United States, and 7s. only by the St. Lawrence; and to make tea 1d per lb and 5 per cent by the St. Lawrence, and 1d per lb. and 12½ per cent by the United States.—He thought this was carrying out what might properly be called a Canadian policy and he confessed he was a little astonished by one of the positions taken by the hon. member for Montreal in his letter of resignation, on that evening. He alluded to the reciprocity that gentleman spoke of establishing with the West Indies. Now what was the meaning of reciprocity with the West Indies? Why did they take our flour cheaper than the United States? Was this not in fact a policy, which the Government now only proposed to extend? If we were to take West Indian sugar at lower duties than American sugar that was not free trade. Nor was this policy opposed to the opening of a canal between the St. Lawrence and Lake Champlain.—At present there were several routes diverging from the St. Lawrence. There was the St. Lawrence and Champlain Railroad; another road was about to be opened from Carleton Place to Oswego, and a third one from Montreal to Portland was nearly completed. Now, the trade through every one of these routes paid toll through the Welland and St. Lawrence Canals, and Montreal was thus at this moment competing with Ogdensburgh and Oswego, whose trade only paid the Welland tolls. Now, what was proposed was, that all vessels that go through the Welland Canal should pay both tolls. This would make a difference of 2½d per barrel on flour. His hon. friend asserted that that would turn all the trade of the St. Lawrence to Buffalo. Now, he did not believe that the American forwarders would have to reduce their charges by that sum, and Canada would get more toll. The cost of carrying flour was made up of freight and tolls. The interest of the forwarders was, of course, to keep the freight at its maximum and the tolls at the minimum. He was not of opinion that this would destroy the trade, and he was prepared to run a great risk for a great object. Were he of opinion, indeed, that this was not an object of importance, he might hesitate. And now he would ask whether, if the canal from the St. Lawrence to Lake Champlain were built, whether it would not be an advantage to that canal to make all parties alike pay the tolls on the Welland. His hon. friend had spoken of his well known attachment to the doctrines of free trade; but he would reply to that, that for fully three years it had been known that he was in favour of adopting this policy, in order to put Canada in a position to negotiate, if, as at present it was said, she had nothing to give in exchange for what she