

"CANADA FOR CANADIANS!"

That, sir, is the position of the United States, and how stand we here? Why, Mr. Chairman, very much the same—you have the Government and the people of Canada on the one side, and certain special interests on the other. True patriots these gentlemen, so they say at least, and I suppose they ought to know! Their slogan is "Canada for the Canadians!" So say I, hut with a difference. My ideal is a free Canada where every man should be free to use his talents and opportunities to the best advantage. Their ideal is apparently a Canada where every man is free to buy goods from them at a price affording "adequate" protection, and apparently they would have their dupes believe that a country collectively can grow rich by increasing its taxation, that a tax is no tax if it goes into their pockets, that we enjoy freedom in the largest sense when a man may be compelled to pay 30 to 40 per cent. more for an article than it is worth in open market, for the benefit of certain privileged classes.

Sir, it appears to me that these men are blind fools. If they knew their own interests, they would accept our proposal of reciprocity with gladness. And mark me, sir, if by any chance they are successful in defeating it, if they should block the present movement, all the result would be that sooner or later, and possibly sooner than later, the tide would rise higher and higher until it swept away all their prerogatives, and themselves along with it. These men, as it appears to me, are acting most foolishly and stupidly in needlessly making this matter a fight between the masses and the classes.

HISTORY OF MOVEMENT

And now, sir, as to the history of this same reciprocity movement. It is now 57 years since the first reciprocity treaty was concluded. Since Lord Elgin, having seen the Parliament house burned before his eyes by fervent loyalists, and having been duly rotten-egged through the streets of Montreal by these same devoted adherents to British connection, did dexterously succeed in effecting a treaty of reciprocity which cut forever and aye the tap-root of the whole annexation movement. This treaty lasted for twelve years, until 1866, when Sir John Macdonald and Sir Alexander Galt were most anxious to obtain a renewal on almost any terms. They failed for certain reasons which it is not now necessary for me to enumerate. They failed again in 1870 and 1871. And after that in 1875, my friends, Mr. Mackenzie and Mr. George Brown, tried their hand also unsuccessfully, and the matter then rested until 1887, when Sir Charles Tupper, who had just returned from what might have been called his honorable banishment in England, again took the business in hand.

And here let me say, sir, that I believe that when Sir Charles Tupper returned from England he had the sagacity to perceive that nothing but a treaty of reciprocity with the United States could possibly undo the mischievous effects produced by Conservative misrule in the decade which had just elapsed.