

is the question we have been grappling with for years, and with which we will have to grapple so long as the confederation exists.

Mr. T. R. BLACK—Do you say that the trade of Nova Scotia is of no consequence to Ontario?

Hon. Mr. LONGLEY (A. G.)—I do not say it is of no consequence, but that it is of little consequence to Ontario. The province of Ontario derives little advantage from having access to the markets of the maritime provinces. Some of the manufactures of Ontario find their way here, and the flour of Ontario is forced upon us against the interests of our people, not because Ontario cannot sell flour as cheaply as the United States, but because it is not to the interest of our people to buy from Ontario, because they have to pay for their flour in cash, whereas if they bought from the United States they would pay in the natural products of the country. I say that the province of Ontario is not deriving any great advantage from access to our markets because they have to pay coal duties in exchange for the flour duties, and it is as much to the interest of Ontario to purchase coal from the mines of Pennsylvania as it is to the interest of the maritime provinces to buy flour from the New England States and to sell their coal in the markets of the New England States.

Dr. McKAY—I would like the hon. attorney-general to say if it is possible to put Nova Scotia coal into the United States even if it went in free?

Hon. Mr. LONGLEY (A. G.)—I have no hesitation in giving my opinion. I have no doubt if, instead of forcing an artificial trade, by which we compel Montreal to buy our coal as we are compelled to buy their flour, if all the customs houses were swept away, our mines would send ten tons to the New England markets where they now send one to Montreal. (Hear, hear.)

I have pointed out briefly the difficulties of the confederation system, and I believe the true solution of the difficulties of confederation is free and unrestricted trade throughout this continent. While the maritime provinces have clearly no natural trade with the upper provinces they have a natural and lucrative trade with the United States. If there were no customs houses between the New England States and the maritime provinces there would at once spring up a natural, lucrative and healthy trade, which would give life, hope and activity to every industry in the country. That is a fact so clear that it cannot be denied for an instant. No public man dare go on a public platform and deny the fact that the most intimate possible commercial relations with the United States would be of the greatest possible advantage to us. Under this system of confederation for a period of twenty years we have had customs barriers between us and the United States. Every article sent from here to the United States, and every article brought back is met, by a hostile barrier. The purpose of the national policy was to stop trade with the United States by forcing and compelling trade between the provinces composing the Dominion. And yet we find that to-day, out of all the ports of Nova Scotia, from the top of the

Bay of Fundy to Canso, and from the island of Cape Breton as well, vessel after vessel, and steamer after steamer is passing out of our ports and turning her prow in the direction of the ports of the United States, and that without the United States as a market to-day this province would be helpless and hopeless. And yet with no barriers between us and the upper provinces we have between us and the upper provinces no natural and healthy trade at all. Occasionally a carload of sugar is sent up, and when such an event happens there is a pow-wow about it in the press. If a load of coal is sent up it is hailed as a great and glorious event. This is impressive evidence that the trade is not natural, but that these things are marvels and prodigies, rather than an indication of any natural and healthy intercourse. I hold that no law should be imposed on mankind anywhere to compel trade in foreign and unnatural channels, when we could have it in natural channels well enough. There has been an almost universal sentiment in favor of reciprocal trade with the United States, and we have not got it.

Mr. T. R. BLACK—I would like the hon. gentleman to explain how the revenue is to be met, in carrying out his theory, when the customs houses are swept away.

Hon. Mr. LONGLEY—I will come to that. There has been a strong feeling in the province of Nova Scotia in favor of commercial relationship with the United States, and I am asked why we have not got it. I have no hesitation in saying that it is because the United States will not give it. We had a reciprocity treaty from 1854 down to 1866. Between 1871 and 1885 there was no reciprocity treaty, but we had a convention in regard to the fisheries. That was nothing like a reciprocity treaty, but even that was terminated by the people of the United States. I have no hesitation in saying that the people of the United States will never consent to a new reciprocity treaty with Canada, and that all the time spent in talking about reciprocity is wasted. What is a reciprocity treaty? It is a treaty under which the customs houses are kept up as before to their entire extent, but certain raw natural products or natural products are allowed to come in free of duty.

Mr. WEEKS—I apprehend that a reciprocity treaty is not limited in any degree. You can make it large and comprehensive or you can confine it as you please.

Hon. Mr. LONGLEY (A. G.)—No treaty has ever yet been negotiated on the basis of the absence of customs houses. The former treaty embraced natural products only, and that would be the theory of any treaty our people have now in view. Why will the United States not give us such a treaty as that? Simply because they are not fools, and because they respect their own interests. They have established large industries which require raw material, and a reciprocity in raw material would mean that we would be sending everything to them, while they would be sending nothing to us. No government in the United States will ever agree to a reciprocity in raw materials, or to any treaty which does not provide that in return for our sending raw materials into the