

CANADIAN PROGRESS AND PREFERENTIAL TRADE.

My Lords and Gentlemen,—Nothing is more welcome to one who has served his country in the King's dependencies beyond the seas than to realise on his return home that his career has been watched by his fellow-countrymen and that his work has been appreciated, and after the cordial terms in which your President has proposed the toast of my health, I am really hardly able to find words in which to respond.

But, gentlemen, what appeals to me most is the fact that I realise that the reception which I have met with to-night emanates from those who, whatever shade of political opinion they may represent, whatever difference of method they may recommend, are mutually proud of our British history, and are mutually devoted to one common cause—the welfare and maintenance of our great Imperial inheritance, a magnificent inheritance created by the national character of those who went forth from these British Islands of our to fight, to colonise, and to administrate, and the future welfare of whose descendants now so largely depends upon our ability to recognise their interests as common with our own. (Hear, hear.)

As Lord Derby has said, I went out to Canada in the “fall”—perhaps I ought to say autumn—(laughter)—of 1898 to take up the position of Governor-General, to which our beloved Queen Victoria had appointed me. The Dominion was not new to me, for I had served on the staff of my old friend and former chief, Lord Lansdowne. We had camped together on the prairies, and marched through the Rocky Mountains before the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, before the destruction of those magnificent forests, before the site of the present city of Vancouver had been cleared by the axe, and I had seen, too, the last of Indian warfare in the West. My correspondence with old friends had not ceased; I had always kept up my interest in the country, and I went back to get many a warm shake of the hand, and to pick up the threads of a life that was not new to me.