

SPEECH DELIVERED BY
HON. CLIFFORD SIFTON

ON

RECIPROCITY

HOW IT LOOKS FROM LONDON.

If the Canadians are wise they will look closely at these indications before it is too late. It is easy enough for them to get into reciprocity; to get out, if they find it does not suit them, will be a very different matter. Let the smaller country once grow dependent upon the gigantic market of the larger and it will seek to withdraw in vain. Canada rendered a mere economic appendage of its southern neighbor, will in due course have to accept any conditions imposed upon her, if she wishes to avoid ruinous dislocation of her whole industrial system. A remorseless pressure will be put upon her from which the only escape may be by a political association such as most Canadians would at present heartily repudiate. They would do better to draw back while there is still time, and sacrifice the project of some advantages in the higher interests of nationhood and self-independence.

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Canada is the mistress of her own destinies. How long will she remain so if she abandons her political or even her economic independence? Territorial absorption apart, can she develop all shades of her many-sided activities when she is compelled to specialise for the American markets? She seeks to be a nation equipped at every point—to have factories as well as forests, a great industrial as well as a great agricultural population, an intelligent and a material identity. How will she stand when a majority of her citizens are kept to growing corn to feed American mouths and cutting timber to feed American paper-mills—when almost everything manufactured, from a new battleship to a new book, comes in from beyond the southern border? At present her position is unique in its advantages. She has all the potentiality of a varied, a complete, and widely diversified national life within her own frontiers, with British capital ready to assist in its development. She has the fullest freedom that any State can enjoy—a self-governing nation, with all the privileges of sovereignty and independence in the amplest measure. And she is at the core of the greatest political agglomeration the world has yet seen. With her unequalled geographical position, astride of the two oceans, commanding the short route between Europe and Asia, she is the central unit of the whole British system, with her share in the Government of a fifth of the human race, with the resources of three hundred million people available to secure her against aggression. But the future holds still greater gifts in store. With her youthful vitality and her rapidly growing population, her material progress, her spirit and energy, she may raise herself, within a comparatively brief period, to the highest position in the Imperial scheme.—London Standard.

HOW IT LOOKED TO SIR WILFRID LAURIE :

"Canada to-day is not in favor of reciprocity. There was a time when Canadians, beginning with myself, would have given many things to obtain the American market, but, thank Heaven, those days are passed and over."—Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

"There was a time when we were wanting reciprocity with the United States, but our efforts and our offers were put aside and negatived. We have said good-bye to that trade and we now put all our hopes upon the British trade."—Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

"Canada has opened her doors to Great Britain in the hope that she would ultimately receive similar preferential treatment from the mother country."—Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

"But I have found in the short experience during which it has been my privilege and my fortune to be placed at the head of affairs, by the will of the Canadian people, that the best and most effective way to maintain friendship with our American neighbors is to be absolutely independent of them."—Sir Wilfrid Laurier.