

vantages of British institutions and constitutional government. The will of the people is supreme in the legislature and executive. Every man lives in peace under wise laws. The commerce of Canada traverses the sea under the protection of a flag the whole world is accustomed to respect. In every trading town in the two hemispheres the Canadian merchant finds a British consul to protect his interests and take care of the humblest seaman. And he cannot but reflect that he is not called upon to contribute one dollar toward the payment of the salary of this official. His ships ride the ocean in security by virtue of a navy which it does not cost him a penny to maintain. Every cottager feels that no foreign foe will ever dare to set his foot upon one inch of Canadian soil, because it is made sacred by the force of British arms, which, while thus casting the halo of its protection over the whole land, has the unspeakable merit of not costing him one farthing for its maintenance. Altogether, the colonial position is so comfortable that ordinary colonists may be pardoned if they do not agitate their souls over the future so long as the present is made secure. At the same time it must be kept in mind that while Canadians derive great and palpable benefits from British connection, these in reality cost Great Britain very little. The military and naval power which throws its protecting shield over the colonies would be essential to maintain the prestige and secure the autonomy of the Empire if no colonies existed. A regiment of soldiers and a few artillerymen and engineers are stationed at Halifax, but it costs no more to support them there than at home. A few warships ride in the harbour of Halifax every summer, but they would cost no less if kept at Portsmouth. The staff of ambassadors and consuls would have to be maintained in any case. Therefore, the fact that the colonies derive certain advantages from British connection, for which they pay nothing, does not offer any sound reason for abandoning the colonial system. It is not very costly, especially in the case of the larger and more important of them.

It would be doing great injustice, however, to the public spirit of the Canadian people to suppose that they will always be content to enjoy the benefits of British connection without sharing its burdens and responsibilities. It would be doing equal injustice to suppose that they will always be content with an exclusion from the full privileges of British citizenship. The two ideas must always be blended. The very moment the Canadian people assume a share of the responsibility of Britain's foreign policy they will claim a voice in shaping it. If they are to be affected by commercial treaties they will have a hand in framing them. If they are to be subject to the consequences of a foreign war they will demand to be heard in deciding the question of peace or war. If they are to pay the expenses of diplomacy they must have a share in directing it, and a portion of the honours and emoluments. In a word, if they give