

they were not asked to support unrestricted reciprocity except on fair terms, such as would be consistent with British connection and with the honor of Canada. Canadians generally are proud of their status as British subjects, and did not want unrestricted reciprocity if it was to involve a change in their nationality, or could only be obtained on terms to which they could not honorably agree. They did not want it at the expense of handing over to another nation this grand Dominion, so extensive in territory, so mighty in resources, and with such grand national prospects in the future. They did not want it if to obtain or keep it we had to cease to be British subjects, and also to abandon our aspirations for an independent Canada on Canada's ceasing to be part of the British Empire.

We are as much attached to our nation as the people of the United States are to theirs. Their attachment to their nation does our neighbors honor, and intelligent men amongst them cannot regard otherwise our attachment to our nation. As no commercial, or other material advantage, real or supposed, would induce the people of the United States to change their allegiance, so neither, I hope, will the prospect of some material advantage induce Canadians to change their allegiance to the Empire. Liberals did not see that unrestricted reciprocity would have any such effect; they believed that with unchanged political relations unrestricted reciprocity would on the whole be a good thing, for our farmers especially, and through them for the whole community. But unrestricted reciprocity at the price of annexation we were not prepared for. Many of us were not prepared to affirm that unrestricted reciprocity at that price would be for even the material advantage of Canada. It is quite certain that the farms of the United States are heavily mortgaged as well as Canadian farms; and we have no solid ground for assuming that they are less heavily mortgaged than our own farms. So our farmers as a class, or our mechanics as a class, or our laborers as a class, whatever the reasons may be, are not less comfortable on the whole than the farmers, mechanics and laborers of the United States appear to be, though these are harassed by no McKinley tariff, and by no like obstruction to the dealing of the States with one another.