

LORD ELGIN

promoted by the old colonial policy of England, that private property had become unsaleable, that not a shilling could be raised on the credit of the province, that public officers of all grades, including the governor-general, had to be paid in debentures which were not exchangeable at par. Under such circumstances it was not strange, said the governor-general, that Canadians were too ready to make unfavourable comparisons between themselves and their republican neighbours. "What makes it more serious," he said, "is that all the prosperity of which Canada is thus robbed is transplanted to the other side of the line, as if to make Canadians feel more bitterly how much kinder England is to the children who desert her, than to those who remain faithful. It is the inconsistency of imperial legislation, and not the adoption of one policy rather than another, which is the bane of the colonies."

He believed that "the conviction that they would be better off if they were annexed," was almost universal among the commercial classes at that time, and the peaceful condition of the province under all the circumstances was often a matter of great astonishment even to himself. In his letters urging the imperial government to find an immediate remedy for this unfortunate condition of things, he acknowledged that there was "something captivating in the project of forming this vast British Empire into one huge *Zollverein*, with free