

mercial intercourse with them. It is incredible, and yet we have heard that idea proclaimed again and again in this House. We are told that unless this retrograde policy is maintained Canada is exposed to danger, and we are threatened that unless this policy of non-intercourse is maintained we are doomed to annexation. Annexation! Annexation! Once upon a time there was a very strong annexationist movement in this country, and it received its first check when Lord Elgin brought back from Washington the reciprocity treaty of 1856. From that day to this the desire for annexation has dwindled and dwindled, until there is not a vestige of it left in any part of this country.

Once upon a time—this is also a matter of history—the conviction of every American citizen was that the Canadian confederation should become a part of the American union. Recent events have shown that there are still men in the United States who harbour that hope. But there are also men who are beginning to perceive that the republic, though its career has been glorious, has yet many questions to solve and many dangers to face; and many of them are beginning to recognize that the solution of their difficult problems would be seriously complicated, perhaps fatally impaired, if, in the territory of the republic, was to be included another territory as large as their own, with a people not yet as numerous, but destined to be as numerous as their own, with problems of their own also to solve and whose union with the United States would only add to the complications which the American people have to meet. If my poor voice could be heard throughout the length and breadth of this country, and if, without any presumption, it could be heard also beyond the frontier, I would say to our American neighbours: flattering as may be to your pride, the idea that the territory of the republic should

extend over the whole continent from the waters of the Gulf of Mexico to the waters of the Arctic Ocean, remember that we Canadian were born under the flag of your ancestors, a flag under which perhaps you may have suffered some oppression, but which to us has been, and is more than ever, the emblem of freedom. Remember that if you have founded a nation upon separation from the motherland, we Canadians have set our hearts upon building up a nation without separation; remember that in this task we are already far advanced, that with our institutions, with our national entity as a people, and with everything that constitutes our national home we are just as devoted as you are to yours. Remember that the blood which flows in our veins is just as good as your own, and that if you are a proud people, though we have not your numbers, we are just as proud as you are, and that, rather than part with our national existence, we would part with our lives. If my voice could be heard that far, I would presume to say to our American friends: There may be a spectacle perhaps nobler yet than the spectacle of a united continent, a spectacle which would astound the world by its novelty and grandeur, the spectacle of two peoples living side by side along a frontier nearly 4,000 miles long, with not a cannon, with not a gun frowning across it, with not a fortress on either side, with no armament one against the other, but living in harmony, in mutual confidence, and with no other rivalry than a generous emulation in commerce and the arts of peace. To the Canadian people I would say that if it were possible for us to obtain such relations between this young and growing nation and the powerful American republic, Canada will have tendered to old England, the mother of nations, nay, to the whole British Empire, a service unequalled in its present effect, and still more in its far-reaching consequences.