

Canada had in that reform, I am not sufficiently conversant with all the details to speak with authority; but I am justified in saying that it was a part of the predetermined policy of the Liberal party in Canada to bring about better social, political and sentimental relations with the Empire. As I understand the matter, it was announced by the Canadian Government to the Imperial authorities that it was their fixed intention to carry into effect at once a reduction in the domestic rate of postage from 3 cents to 2 cents, and that it was also their fixed intention to reduce the rate of postage upon letters sent across the Atlantic; but that they would wait the action of the Imperial authorities in calling a convention to take this matter into consideration, and, if possible, arrange a penny postage throughout the Empire. That convention met in London in June last, considered the whole question, and carried a motion, moved by my hon. friend the Postmaster General (Mr. Mulock) for the adoption of Imperial penny postage. Thus the dream of an Imperial penny postage became a reality. I need not say much with regard to its material benefits. If we reflect that in Canada to-day one out of every ten of the population has been born in the mother country and has relatives and friends across the Atlantic, we will begin to understand what a potent factor this increased facility of communication will be in swelling the tide of immigration now happily setting in towards this country. I saw a few days ago a statement that some of our merchants and manufacturers had recently established agencies in England for the purpose of extending their business. Such a movement would have been rendered impossible if the old five-cent rate had continued in force. It is chiefly, however, along another line that a great change has been effected by this reform. By means of the free interchange of letters between the different parts of the British Empire and the different colonies, there will of course be a much greater interchange of thought and sentiment. What more natural result than that there should arise out of this free interchange of thought and patriotic sentiment the loftier idea that the colonies and the mother country—not separated but joined by the seas—compose one empire, and that our duty and aim and ultimate destiny is to weld into a harmonious whole the varied elements of that great Empire.

Last year I read with pleasure the efforts of this Government in the direction of giving the people of England a preference in our markets. That preference was given to the extent of a rebate of 25 per cent in the customs duties on goods brought into Canada from the mother country. I refer to this, not for the purpose of showing the effect it had upon the material prosperity of either country, but for the purpose of indicating the change of sentiment it brought about. Some would call this a free

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gift on the part of the people of Canada. It was rather an expression of the love and devotion which Canadians have for the mother land. It was rather an expression of the gratitude that Canadians feel for the protection we have received from the mother country ever since we became a colony. Whatever it was, it seemed to have gone straight home to the heart of the English people and to have taken them by storm. The effect of the penny postage will be along the same line. Both these measures will have the anticipated effect of bringing about closer relations, both in sentiment and in reality, between Canada and the rest of the Empire.

As a Canadian, Mr. Speaker, I rejoice in the change of sentiment that I see being manifested on both sides of the Atlantic. At one time the impression of the English people, as regards the colonies, was that the colonies were as the fruit of the tree. When the fruit ripened, it naturally separated from the parent stem. When the colony matured it was bound to fall away and become independent. There was a time when, in the opinion of the people of England, the colonies were a source of weakness and expense to the Empire. Let the colonies go. That opinion, I am glad to say, no longer exists. I rejoice to see the colonizing and Imperial spirit of England again predominant—that spirit which has been manifesting itself of late in carrying the flag into the heart of darkest Africa and planting it in triumph where it floats to the breeze to-day above the fortress of Omdurman. I rejoice also to see a change of sentiment on this side of the Atlantic. There was a time in this country when a number of our people favoured annexation to the United States. But where will you find any indication of that sentiment to-day? There was a time (and my hon. friends opposite will doubtless agree with me) when there was a desire for commercial union with the United States. Where will you find any such feeling to-day? There was a time when with many of us the impression prevailed that the hour had come for us to cut loose from the leading strings of the mother country, that we were old enough and rich enough and strong enough to become independent. These sentiments, I am thankful to say, have been relegated to the past, never again, I hope, to be resurrected. We are proud of Canada and of being Canadians—we shall never cease to be that—but our sentiments are rapidly taking a wider range and a loftier flight. We are prouder still of being citizens of an Empire—the freest, the strongest and the greatest upon which the sun shines to-day. It is because the 25 per cent reduction on the duty on British goods and the establishment and operation of the Imperial penny postage create and foster sentiments like these that all Canadians irrespective of party give to these measures their unqualified approval.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I find that the time