

ship—a manifestation to the world of the strength of Imperial kinsmanship; but the long strain of war, sufferings, and losses have sown throughout the Empire the seeds for a recognition of the necessity for some scheme of common defensive action, some acceptance of joint naval and military responsibility and expenditure throughout our self-governing possessions, whilst Mr. Chamberlain's eloquence, even his opponents may admit, has encouraged us to think Imperially, and has taught some of us to wonder whether, in view of our present trade relations with foreign Powers, in view of the vastly increasing production of our Colonies especially in foodstuffs and the enormous Imperial interest involved in our Colonial trade, in view also of the possible future trade relations of our Colonies with foreign Powers, it may not be wise for us to listen to the sentiment which would direct our commercial interests into one common channel. (Hear, hear.)

I am not going to trespass upon the domain of politics; I am dealing only with facts. We all know the whole question is bristling with difficulties of every sort—difficulties as to different systems of revenue, objections that may be raised by conflicting interests, prophecies as regards the possible effect on present market prices; but, at the same time, I do think I am justified, after six years in the Dominion—in constant intercourse with its leading public men, with the Canadian Press and official reports constantly before me, and not having kept myself shut up, as officials are often accused of doing, but, having mixed with everybody that I could—I think I am justified in attempting to remove the misleading impressions which have been so unfortunately encouraged in this country, and which have emanated entirely, I believe, from the publication of the hasty conclusions of visitors to the Dominion—some of them distinguished public men—the majority of whom entertained strongly preconceived ideas as to the impossibility of closer relations, and who invariably spent a considerable portion of their very few days in the country in consultation with the only anti-Imperial oracle in Canada. I do not think I should be worth my salt, having just retired from the position of Governor-General, if I did not do my best to contradict them. (Hear, hear.)

I have gathered from such sources that Canada is lukewarm on the question of Imperial preference, that this question played no part at the recent general election, that her wisest men fear that her independence and right of self-government may be adversely affected by tariff bonds, that she has made nothing approaching an offer for preferential trade, that if she is seeking preferential advantages it is for her own selfish ends, that to assume that relations may be drawn closer by the