

Mr. Chamberlain, with his unique capacity for burying himself in one idea at a time, has been chiefly instrumental in preaching the decline of British power and capacity. Nothing more strikingly demonstrates his well-known demagogic influence than his remarkable feat in bringing so many British people from a condition of prosperous contentment to the very brink of ruin, within a twelve-month. The very Empire itself is for him but as clay in the hands of the potter; for has he not assured us time and again, that by means of the Boer War he brought it to a condition of unparalleled unity and solidarity; and has he not, within a very short period, reduced it to such a parlous condition that nothing can save us from destruction but committing our destinies to his charge, by giving him a blank mandate to work out our salvation? Now we in Canada cannot dictate to the British people what commercial policy they must adopt, for we in the past chose for ourselves, and insisted upon following the example of the United States, not that of Britain. We can have nothing to say, therefore, even should the British people under the influence of Mr. Balfour, Mr. Chamberlain, and their assistants, become convinced that their day of greatness and independence has suddenly passed, and that henceforth instead of following a policy of their own and leading the commercial world, as they have done so long, they must go back several centuries and learn once more to imitate the example and copy the policy of other European nations. But, in the face of such possible changes, it behooves us in Canada to know where we stand, so that we shall not be blindly committed to a line of policy which may be inconsistent with our national interests and dignity, or threaten the maintenance of those higher relationships within the Empire, which must be independent of fiscal changes in any part of it.

• It is my chief purpose, in the following pages, to throw