

## TO WHOM ARE WE TO BELONG?

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The present crisis, in commercial affairs, is one of general interest to the whole British Empire, and more or less to the whole family of nations. The giant trade of the first power in the world is in the transition state, and is advancing by hasty strides to absolute Free Trade. But to no portion of the universe is this vast commercial movement so important as the British North American Provinces. The remarks which apply to one of these Provinces will apply in part or in whole to all. I have therefore spoken of the Colonies collectively, though, I shall confine my illustrations to Canada exclusively, as my desire is to appeal to the interests and feelings of Canadians. Canada, labouring under the disadvantageous circumstances of position and climate, shut out from the seaboard, communicating with the Ocean by a long and dangerous river navigation, and suffering from a winter, whose severity can only be compared to that of Russia, is perhaps of all countries in the world, certainly of all parts of the British Empire, the one which needs the greatest weight of protection to its commercial and agricultural interests. But to found a claim to this protection, it is necessary to demonstrate—1st. That Canada will be enabled to repay that protection, 2nd. That the refusal on the part of the Imperial Government to protect the interests of Canada will be attended with injury to England. For the first proposition it is but necessary to glance at the geographical extent and natural capabilities of Canada, in order to give an affirmative answer.

Passing over the great tract of arable land, of the highest natural fertility, lying between Lake Erie, Lake Ontario, Lake Huron, and the western bank of the Ottawa, forming an area of eighteen millions of acres, capable of producing wheat—passing over the enormous and fertile wilderness to the north and north-west of Lake Huron—passing over large and arable tracts in still more northern latitudes, which may one day form the homes of a hardy and enterprising population of as yet unborn millions, and