

**CANADA AND THE
EMPIRE: AN
EXAMINATION OF
TRADE PREFERENCES**

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Canada and the Empire: an examination of trade preferences by Edwin S. Montagu & Bron Herbert

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EDWIN S. MONTAGU & BRON HERBERT

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BY
EDWIN S. MONTAGU
AND
BRON HERBERT.

WITH A PREFACE BY
RT. HON. THE EARL OF ROSEBERY, K.G.

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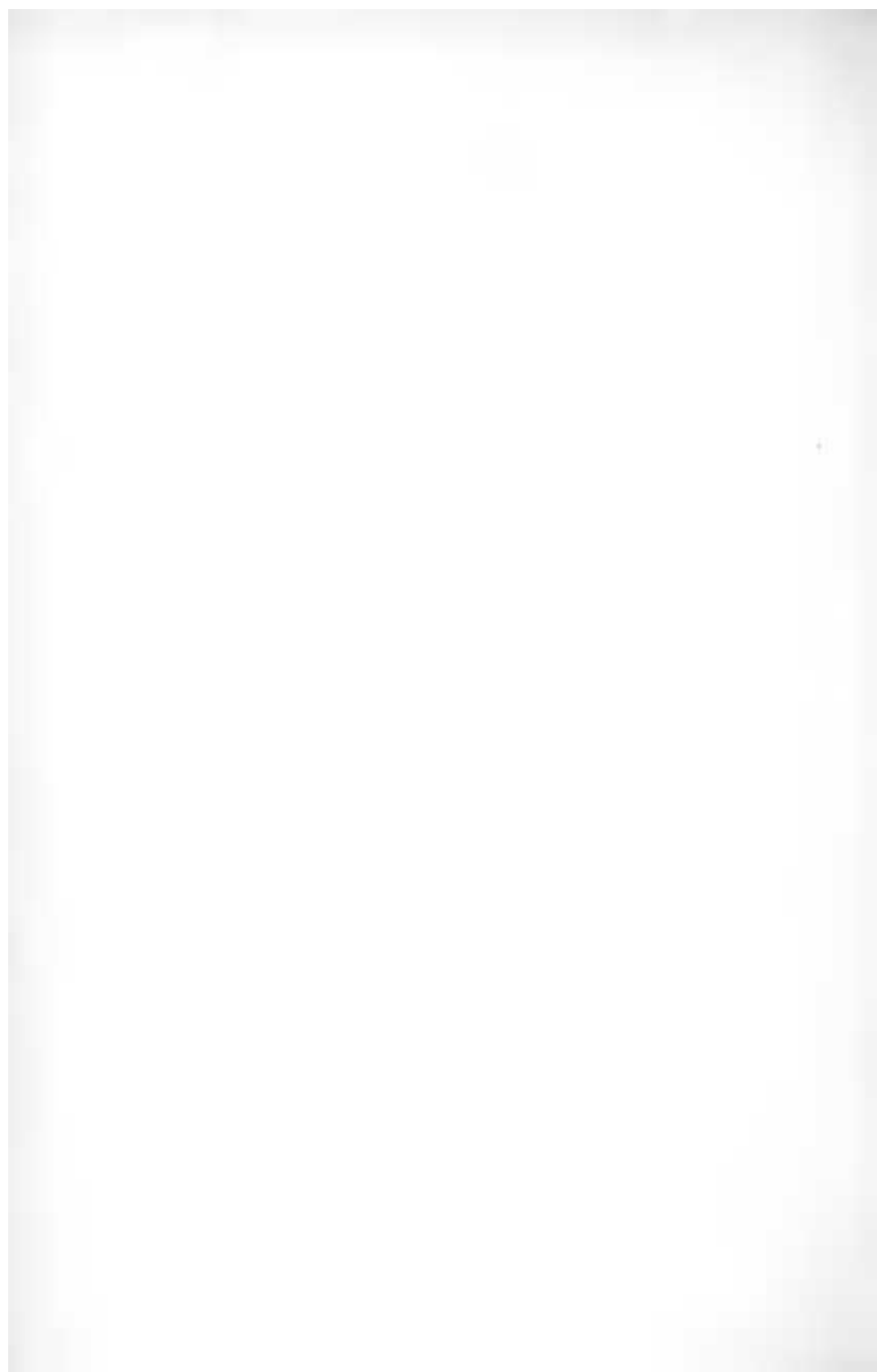
LOYALTY AND PREFERENCE.



"Every self-respecting Canadian resents the argument, used on scores of platforms in Britain, and published in scores of British newspapers, that Mr. Chamberlain's Protectionist Policy, even though it may raise the cost of food to the millions of wage-earners in Britain, should be adopted by the British people, because it would secure and retain the loyalties of the Colonies. . . . If the electors of Britain see it to be to their advantage to change their fiscal policy so as to raise a tariff wall against foreign countries, while holding an open door for the Colonies, let them register their votes accordingly; but let no campaigner, even though he be Mr. Chamberlain himself, slander Canadians in measuring their loyalty by any tariff preference."—From the Toronto "Globe" (the leading organ of the Canadian Government), December 31, 1903.

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HARVARD

ENCLOSURE



PREFACE.

It seems to me that this little book is well worth the consideration of fair-minded enquirers at this time ; particularly of those who are lured by the hope of a closer connection between the different parts of the Empire as a probable or possible result of the fiscal proposals now before the country.

The authors are two young men, sincere and convinced Imperialists, who went to Canada last autumn with the earnest desire to ascertain the truth for themselves and on the spot.

They have here laid before the public the result of their enquiries ; which will tend to strengthen the position of those who see in the new fiscal policy not a probable bond but a possible dissolvent of Empire. That is the anxiety that lies deep in the minds of many of the opponents of that policy, who believe that the British Empire can only be surely maintained and developed on the fundamental principle of allowing

each self-governing part of it to shape its own fiscal policy by its own interests and its own methods. This fiscal independence these parts have long enjoyed, and are determined to preserve; but it is precisely that fiscal independence which it would be one of the main objects or results of Mr. Chamberlain's policy to restrict. Specially then to be commended to hesitating Imperialists is the chapter entitled "Results of the Policy"; and chiefly that part of it which is headed "The Gain to the Empire."

For the danger of this policy lies in the fatal fact that people will not think for themselves. There is a laudable attraction about the label "Imperial";—people dislike to be dissociated from anything so ticketed, and they are right. But they should learn to distinguish between what aims at Empire and what makes for Empire. For this reason they should visit the Colonies and understand Colonial feeling and conditions on the spot before they pronounce on problems of this kind. And, when they cannot visit the Colonies themselves, the best they can do is to read the experiences of those

who have been able to do so, like our authors. This is the more necessary, as the London newspaper is so largely enlisted in Mr. Chamberlain's cause. Information thus furnished cannot but be consciously or unconsciously coloured by the channels through which it passes. Yet no one can pronounce on these problems without the largest and most unbiased knowledge.

There is, too, another danger—to my mind a very grave one—to which our authors call attention. It is this, that the views which are cabled from London to the Dominion are as favourable as the London Press to Mr. Chamberlain's agitation. This is a serious matter of which I have no personal knowledge. But if it be true that the effect of these communications is to misrepresent the Liberal party, corporately, as it is misrepresented at home, and tax it with indifference or hostility to the idea of Empire, the mischief is an Imperial peril. For the Liberal party is predominant throughout the Empire. There is not a self-governing Colony which would tolerate a Cabinet holding the views and policy of

ours in domestic questions for a month. The natural sympathy of such Colonies should then be with the Liberal party. But if they are under the impression that it is necessary that a reactionary party should control and fetter the old root-country, and that a party in sympathy with their own views of domestic policy is a menace to the Empire, we are in full view of a situation detrimental not merely to the Liberal party but to the Empire as a whole.

If the authors have not made one truth evident they must be held to have failed in their purpose. That truth is that the Canadians are convinced that both their prosperity and their allegiance to the Empire depend on their realised independence and right of self-government under the Crown. These they will not allow to be tampered with. But the wisest Canadians see that these will be greatly affected by tariff bonds, which would not merely produce constant friction, but seriously curtail freedom of action. When this result became apparent, snap would go the tariff bond—and some other bonds would be seriously strained as well.