

Brantford (Mr. Cockshutt), with respect to the loss of the position for which they and their fathers had sacrificed so much. If they could have been present as disembodied spirits that floated in the atmosphere of this Chamber and if they could have heard these utterances in which there was cause for wonderment on their part, one could only conjecture what their conclusions would have been. When I have called in evidence the testimony of these men, when I have reminded you, Mr. Speaker, and the country of it, when I have recalled to the memories of men now living the utterances of these statesmen who sacrificed so much for the common good, I think, Sir, that you will also wonder at the attitude of hon. members of this House who have given utterance to sentiments that I am sure could not have been shared by those men, the Macdonalds, the Browns, the Cartiers, the Galts, the McDougalls, the Tilleyes, the Tupperes, the Archibalds, the McCulleys, the Coles, the Palmers, the Whalens and the Grays—if these men could have listened to the remarks of hon. gentlemen opposite, if they could have seen, or heard, or realized the attitude of these hon. gentlemen with respect to this great confederation, if they could have anticipated that after a period of forty-five years the giants of their day would shrink into lilliputians, I am sure that they would have felt that they were sacrificing much to no purpose. I do not say that my hon. friends opposite prided themselves in it but they assumed the name of Liberal-Conservatives.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: That is an assumption.

Mr. EMMERSON: Only an assumption, true, but they did it because there were men in the British American colonies in 1864, 1865, 1866 and 1867 who were big enough to forget their political grievances, who were big enough to push into the background their partisan conflicts and to unite for a purpose, the purpose of the common good, the purpose of creating a British-American nation on this continent. I shall call as witnesses each of these gentlemen in turn so that the attitude which they took may be known and so that it may be known what were their hopes and opinions and aspirations with respect to this proposed confederation.

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot see the exact connection between the history of Confederation and the second reading of this Bill. It does seem to me that the hon. gentleman is not wise in the course which he is now pursuing.

Mr. EMMERSON: I bow with great deference to your judgment, Mr. Speaker, but I think I can point out to you that we are

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departing from the aims and objects of Confederation, that we are travelling away from what was hoped for by the men who framed the British North America Act and I think that I am throwing some light upon the question of the way we should treat this proposed measure which is one to send a contribution, which is one to deteriorate our position, which is one that will debase us and degrade us from the position of a young nation into the position of suppliants and tribute-givers to another country. That is my argument and I think when I read from a speech by Sir John Macdonald, or John A. Macdonald as he was then known, delivered on September 8, 1864—

Mr. SPEAKER: I have no desire to curtail the hon. gentleman's remarks, but it seems to me that it would be more to the point to show how this Bill will affect the situation now than to go into the history of Confederation which took place nearly half a century ago.

Mr. EMMERSON: I think that I should be permitted, with all deference to you, to say that Sir John Macdonald had in mind the building of a Canadian navy.

Mr. SPEAKER: I frankly admit that if the hon. member proposes to do that, he is in order.

Mr. EMMERSON: I am sorry that your honour has been so impatient—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order, order.

Mr. EMMERSON: and I am sorry that through any defect of speech on my part, I have not been able to give some idea of the purpose for which I intended to bring in this testimony. You must remember that it was stated on the floor of this House not later than the day before yesterday that this was not a nation, and that we were simply a self-governing colony. Sir John A. Macdonald, speaking at Charlotte-town, on September 8, 1864, and describing the desirability of bringing the provinces into a confederation said:

And it would also give them in their united manhood that national prowess and strength which would make them at least the fourth nation on the face of the globe.

At Halifax, on the 12th of September, 1864, he said:

I believe we shall have at length an organization that will enable us to be a nation and protect ourselves as we should.

Again he said:

I hope that we will be enabled to work a constitution that will have a strong central government able to offer a powerful resistance to any foe whatsoever. We all approached the subject feeling its importance, feeling that in our hands are the destinies of a nation in connection with the British Empire and under the British Queen.