

greater wealth and population of Canada, the influence and authority of Canada bear all before it. It is a principle too obvious for proof or dissertation, that Confederation in its proper sense can only thrive where the States bound together by the federal compact are not only free, but where they are nearly equal. Excess of power in any one State is fatal to the interests of the rest. No, Sir, the word Confederation has no application to the intended movement. Lord Granville, in his despatch, no longer calls it by such a term. Union and Incorporation are spoken of, not Confederation, and the movement really is one of incorporation, absorption, and annihilation.

Now, Sir, the objections that I raise are objections to the provisions of the Organic Act, and I find it necessary, for the purposes of my argument, to turn to those provisions. I do not mean to detain the Council at unnecessary length, but as the question before us is one which concerns the future of this Colony for all time, I trust that I shall be excused if I dwell for a few moments upon these points.

If we come into Confederation, we come in, as I understand it, under the Organic Act; and it is on account of the overwhelming influence of Canada in the joint Legislature of the Dominion as given by that Act, that I object to the general principle of the confederation of the North American Provinces of Great Britain. I am told I am in error, that profound Statesmen in Great Britain and in Canada have determined otherwise, and that Confederation, on the basis of the Organic Act of 1867, is the policy of Great Britain.

I regret, Sir, that I cannot be silenced by the weight of such authority. No statesmanship, no conclusion, is of any value except for the reasoning on which it is founded; and I am ready to rest the whole matter on simple argument and reason. All States large enough and populous enough to warrant such privileges, eagerly and passionately desire the power of self-government. It is the common passion of our race. Formerly, even now, in other places, it is British policy to give these powers; and as New South Wales has thrown off Victoria and Queensland, so would it appear to be reasonable to extend the principle to the British Provinces in North America, rather than to adopt a different policy, for the simple reason that it is in accordance with the instincts of the Anglo-Saxon race, and the just rights of man.

We want self-government, which means the protection of our own interests, and the establishment of our own welfare in our own way; the passing of our own Estimates in our own way; the selection of those who rule, and the subsequent meeting of our rulers, face to face, in open Council, that they may show us the results of their ruling. It means the imposition and collection of our own taxes, fostering our own industries, and the power of the purse. These are the elements of self-government, and they are reserved to the Dominion Government, and taken from the Provinces; hence my objections to the Organic Act. For these reasons I say that Confederation—or rather union—with Canada cannot be fair and equal, on account of the overwhelming influence of Canada in the Dominion Parliament, now and in the future, for it always must be so. Canada can extend, and will extend, and even of herself would be able to sway the destinies of the Dominion. And are we to accept this position because we are told that British statesmanship wills it. Statismanship, Sir, is nothing more than very sound common sense put into practice—sound common sense, backed by a knowledge of mankind and of the subject matter to which that statesmanship is applied. And, although it is not for me to depreciate the renown of my countrymen, it cannot be disguised that they have not unfrequently gone astray, and been forced to submit to the control of national interests and national will. It is not difficult to find instances of error in British statesmanship as applied to Colonial affairs. The errors of British Statesmen, with a majority of the House of Commons and the British Nation to back them, cost Great Britain the thirteen United States. The errors of British Statesmen, with a majority of the House of Commons and the British Nation to back them, have inflicted wrongs upon Ireland, which are only now in process of removal. And the policy of British Statesmen, with the British Nation to back it, has created a difference which has gone far to alienate the affections of the Colonists of New Zealand.

In this question of Confederation it is impossible not to see the self-interest of Great Britain underlying the whole matter. England is alarmed at the extent of her Colonial Possessions, and her obligations to protect them by sea and land. Of all her possessions,

the Dominion of Canada is the most assailable; and, doubtless, Great Britain stands alarmed at the responsibility and cost of protecting so enormous a frontier. The question of Confederation is the question of every tax-paying Englishman, and whatever may be the reasoning put forth, the motive is economy and security to the tax-paying public of Great Britain. Confederation is, doubtless, of value to Great Britain, as establishing a counterpoise to the United States of America, and probably inducing the Dominion of Canada to ask for and obtain independence, and so relieve the Mother Country from the cost and duty of defending it. This is, I believe, the entire Statesmanship of the measure—a Statesmanship meritorious in English eyes—but, as I believe, fraught with extreme danger to British interests in this quarter of the globe.

Turning now to what may be called the argument in favor of Confederation, we have Lord Granville's despatch. Lord Granville, it must be admitted, has ably, gracefully, and placably put before us the supposed advantages of Confederation—"Her Majesty's Government believe that a Legislature selected from an extended area, and representing a diversity of interests, was more likely to deal more comprehensively with large questions, and more impartially with small questions, and more conclusively with both, than is possible when controversies are carried on and decided upon in the comparatively narrow circle in which they arise. Questions of purely local interest would be more carefully and dispassionately considered when disengaged from the larger politics of the Country, and at the same time would be more sagaciously considered by persons who have had this larger political education."

Finally, they anticipate that the interests of every Province of British North America would be more advanced by enabling the wealth, credit and intelligence of the whole to be brought to bear on every part, than by encouraging each in the contracted policy of taking care of itself, possibly at the expense of its neighbour." This I understand to be the argument of the Colonial Office in favour of Confederation; and although I fully admit that it is well put, I believe that no argument is more fallacious. It is delicate ground for me to touch when I presume to differ from what comes from so able a man. On this point I wish to make myself distinctly understood. I do not profess to be a statesman or a politician, but as a lawyer of mature age, pretending to a fair share of common sense and a knowledge of human nature, I will venture to say, that if there is one passion more powerful in the minds of Colonists of Anglo-Saxon origin than another, it is the passion for self-government; in all English communities there is an ardent passion for self-government. Colonists here, as everywhere else, are animated by an intense desire to govern themselves in the way they think best, and to delegate that power to others is destructive of every feeling of self respect and of social and political liberty.

It is not necessary for me to prove that this is the case, it is too notorious for comment; and as long as the spirit of liberty exists in the British Nation we shall find that no one Province will submit to legislation at the hands of a Legislature in which its interests and welfare are overwhelmed and overborne. To secure submission to a Legislature such as that of the Dominion of Canada, where the majority of the Canadian Members make the law, uniformity of interest and feeling is necessary; and not only will the feeling of any separate Province be wounded by the consciousness that self-government is withheld from it, but on finding that its interests, or its feelings, are overwhelmed and subjected to the interests and feelings of a dominant portion, the sense of discontent and dissatisfaction will become universal and national, hence will ensue a condition of things most perilous to British interests generally.

The bond of union between Canada and the other Provinces bears no resemblance to the union between England and her Colonial Possessions. There is no natural love and original feeling of loyalty. The feeling of loyalty towards England is a feeling blind, instinctive, strong, born with us, and impossible to be shaken off; and I believe it is impossible to transfer a feeling of loyalty and fealty at will. The connection between the Mother Country and a Colony, even a Crown Colony, is well understood in principle and in practice. The Mother Country guarantees the Colony from enemies abroad, and the entire work of inter-colonial management is, except in matters of prerogative, left to the Colonists themselves. The