

finally almost unanimously agreed to in 1871. Prince Edward Island and Manitoba were also admitted about the same time, and then the whole of Canada was united as a Dominion, with one parliament at Ottawa and a Governor-General for all, while each province had a local legislature or parliament, and a lieutenant-governor of its own. In other words, under Confederation, which means a joining or federating together, the different governments of British North America ceased to be crown colonies and became provinces, while all together formed one colony, or Dominion, of the British Empire.

There were a number of terms of agreement in connection with Confederation, which are set forth in the British North America Act, or Canadian constitution. This agreement had to be confirmed by the parliaments of each of the provinces of the Dominion and of Great Britain, in order to make it binding on all. The principal terms of the agreement were that the Dominion took over or assumed the debts of the colonies, managed the customs, inland revenue and post office system, made laws for criminal offences, appointed and paid the judges and lieutenant-governors of each province, gave an allowance of eighty cents a head of population in each of the provinces up to a limit of 400,000, and generally undertook to look after all matters affecting Canada as a whole. The provinces, on their part, turned over the revenues from the customs and inland revenues and the post offices to the Dominion, but retained the right to make laws governing their own local affairs.

So far as British Columbia was concerned the most important item in the agreement was that Canada should build a railway connecting the waters of the Pacific Ocean with the railway systems of Eastern Canada. Surveys were to be commenced at once, and construction of the line begun within two years. Owing to the great magnitude of the undertaking it was a long time before the contract was fully carried out. Very few then realized the enormity of the task of building a line 3,000 miles long from Montreal to the coast, through a then wild and almost unknown country. This may be better understood when it is known that through the mountains of British Columbia the main line has cost to build and equip, on an average, \$55,000 a mile, or roughly, \$25,000,000 for five hundred miles. Parts of the line north of Lake Superior, where the rocks are very hard, cost \$100,000 a mile.