

some of the most valued friendships of my life, so that my acquaintance with Americans has led me to form a most appreciative estimate of their social and domestic relations, of which I can not speak in terms of too much praise. But my experience of the political institutions of that Country only led me to prize our own more highly, and made me more than ever an Englishman; and I rejoice at the opportunity now afforded me of raising my voice against any movement tending in the direction of incorporating this Country with the United States.

I must now make passing allusion to a petition gotten up in some mysterious way, looked upon here at first as a mere joke; so insignificant that it would not be worthy of notice but for the use made of it elsewhere. It has been represented in other quarters as expressing the views of a great portion of this community. It has been so represented in very high quarters, and I therefore notice it; and in doing so I feel compelled to state that, so far as I could learn, it was signed by a very small number of people—forty-two I believe in all—many of whom were aliens, and most of whom were foreign-born subjects, and who appeared to have been generally actuated by prejudice, based upon a lack of information respecting Canada and the Canadians, and not by any regard for the permanent benefit of the community. But as this petition has been followed up by the publication of letters and by a discussion in the newspapers, which we cannot blink, as to what has been represented in this Colony to the United States; and as allusion was made to it, by an incognito at all events, in this Council yesterday, I feel bound to express my opinion of what our position would be under any such union as has been hinted at.

If British Columbia were placed in the same position as Washington Territory, we should be absolutely without representation—for that Territory has one representative in Congress it is true, but he has no vote—and all our Officials would come from Washington. Annexation to the United States would also entail on us largely increased taxation, and would most materially affect an interest which the Hon. Member for Victoria told you would suffer most from Confederation. Why, Sir, under the union suggested, our farmers would be brought into direct competition with the farmers of Washington Territory and Oregon, and then our agricultural interests would be indeed annihilated. Again, if this country were American Territory you would have the whole influence of San Francisco brought to bear against the mercantile interests of Victoria; no hope could we have of building up a port here to rival San Francisco; no, Sir, you would never see a foreign vessel in these waters. I see no advantages in the suggestion; I have heard none pointed out, unless it be the questionable expectation that American capital might buy up the real estate in and around Victoria, and so give the present holders the opportunity of realizing their property into money and then leave the country to its fate. But in this hope, Sir, I believe they would be egregiously disappointed. I will not pursue the subject any further; Annexation is entirely out of the question, and I should not have dared to allude to it, but for the introduction of the subject by another Honourable Member yesterday. What do these foreign petitioners propose to transfer? Themselves? Their own property? No; not themselves, nor that which belong to them, but the whole Colony, the soil of this vast domain which belongs to the Crown and the people of England; this I regard as treasonable. In supporting Confederation I support the flag I serve. I say that loyalty is no exploded idea, call it a sentiment if you will; life is nothing without sentiment; everyone whose soul is not dead must cling to love of Country and attachment to her flag, as one of the most cherished sentiments of the heart, and I regard loyalty as one of the most deep-rooted and highly prized treasures of the human breast. ["Hear, hear," from all sides.]

Bear with me, Sir, while I tell now what I think Confederation is not. I don't think it necessarily means Responsible Government, or, as an Honourable Member at the other end of the House has put it, that it means getting rid of Government Officials. If that Honourable Member's desire is to be rid of the present incumbents of office so that others may take their place, I think it probable that his wishes in this respect may be gratified through Confederation; and in that case I could only hope that the change would be beneficial to the Colony. But I doubt much if this measure would receive support from this Council on these grounds; and at all

events the Honourable Gentleman cannot expect much sympathy on that score from this side of the House.

Again, Confederation does not, to my mind, mean Responsible Government, as some Honourable Members hold. British Columbia will assuredly get Responsible Government as soon as the proper time arrives, as soon, that is to say, as the community is sufficiently advanced in population, and in other respects, to render such a form of Government practically workable; sooner probably through Confederation, than by any other means, and the sooner the better I say. But I do not think it desirable to fetter or cumber the proposed terms of union with anything about Responsible Government, and specially for the reason that we should find it very difficult to arrive at any conclusion in favor of it. Great difference of opinion exists upon the subject even around this Council Board, and I am by no means sure that the strongest opposition to Responsible Government would come from the Government side of the House. It is easier to change the constitution after Confederation than before. ["No, no."] Under the Organic Act, this Colony could get the form of Government in fact it is the special prerogative under this Act, of each Province to regulate the constitution of its own Executive Government and Legislature; and whence this desire to act so prematurely now in this respect?

Another Honourable Member has told you that in his opinion Confederation means the terms—means a Railway; but I take it, Sir, that the result of the result from Confederation, and that the railway is a means to the end, for we cannot have real Confederation without a Railway. But, Sir, I advocate Confederation on principle; and I believe the terms to be the natural result of Confederation. They flow from it as a natural consequence, as the effect proceeds from the cause. I believe that by Confederation, we are to gain those advantages which are set forth in the terms.

If it could be shown that by acceptance of these terms we should in any way sacrifice our honour—lose any political status that we now enjoy, I would not support Confederation if it brought a dozen Railroads. But I believe that each member of this community will be raised by the change. We shall have a distinct and very respectable representation in the House of Commons and Senate. We shall have as representatives there, men whose voice will be heard, men whose duty it will be to speak for us. Far from entreating the views expressed by the two Honourable Members for Victoria, I am inclined to think with the Honourable Member for New Westminster, that this Colony will have its due weight and influence in the Dominion, that its representatives will be heard and listened to in the Canadian Parliament, and that this will be a favored portion of the Confederation, when admitted, on account of its position as the outlet of Canada on the Pacific. I do not, then, advocate Confederation specially on account of the terms. I find in its general merits ample grounds for support, and I consider, as I have said, that the terms follow as a matter of course.

The Honourable Member for Victoria has said that we are bound to prove the benefits. It is difficult to prove any thing to some minds. The benefits of Confederation are among those things which being in futurity we cannot prove. I cannot prove that which has not happened. We can only rely on human judgment and experience, and argue that such and such things will occur, as certain causes will produce certain effects. I, and other Official Members of this Colony, have a considerable interest in this Council; I have to a certain extent identified myself with it and its concerns for some years past, and speaking as an individual Member of this Council, if I did not believe that Confederation would prove advantageous to this Colony, and rebound to the benefit of our local interests, I should not support it by my voice. I might as a Government servant vote for it as a Government measure, but I should not be standing here to speak for it and to advocate it as heartily as I do. It is hardly possible to show where the Colony will be benefited by Confederation, without discussing the terms, which is not my present intention to do, but I promise Honourable Members that if these Resolutions get into Committee, I will fully satisfy them of the local advantages that must accrue to the Colony from union with Canada, on the terms proposed in these Resolutions.

I believe, Sir, that many of the objections which have been raised to Confederation have arisen from prejudiced feelings. I have no reason to be prejudiced