

any nation. But, whilst professing great respect for the people and for the Government of the United States, I confess that I do not like their political institutions. I have many friends in America, and I have spent some time there myself; in their military service, but I left America a greater Canadian than ever. And I say, Sir, that I deem the action taken by certain foreigners here, in getting up a petition, which has perhaps been brought into more prominent notice than it was entitled to, exceedingly unhappy, and I knew that I speak the sentiments of my constituents when I say so. These foreigners have received every hospitality, and have been treated with respect and liberality in this Colony; they enjoyed all the rights and privileges to which they would have been entitled in their own country, and perhaps more; they have acted foolishly towards the flag that sheltered them, and have abused the hospitality which has been extended to them in getting up this petition. If any British subjects signed it, I consider them unworthy of the name; they would be better in the chain-gang.

I must refer once again to the Hon. Member for Victoria City. He said that patriotism was dead in this Colony; that interest and self-interest was paramount, and that the dollar was supreme, and was the only patriotism. [Dr. Helmecke—“What? what? I said nothing of the kind.”] I maintain that the words were used, and I say that the Hon. Member misunderstood or misrepresented the feelings of the people of this Colony in saying so. It is, perhaps, unbecoming in me, who have not the stake in the Country, and who have not the status, domestic, monetary, or political, of most other gentlemen round this Council Board, and who have, comparatively speaking, but lately come to the Colony, to express an opinion; but nevertheless I do say that patriotism is not dead in this Colony, and that the people are as patriotic, noble, and generous-hearted as any other people in the world.

Hon. Mr. Helmecke—Sir, I rise to a question of privilege. I cannot allow the Hon. Member to make a speech about something I did not say without correcting him. I said that this Colony had no love for Canada; the bargain for love could not be; it can only be the advancement of material interests which will lead to union.

Hon. Mr. Carrall—I maintain, Sir, that I have not in any way exaggerated what the Hon. gentleman did say; and I conclude by saying that the people of British Columbia are loyal, honourable, and true, and when they give their adhesion to the Dominion they will uphold the British flag, as they always have been upheld—

“The flag that has braved a thousand years
The battle and the breeze.”

The Hon. Mr. ALSTON, Registrar General, said—Sir, I should not have risen to attempt to make a speech at this late hour, had it not been from the peculiar position which I occupy in this Council, and I feel that I ought to apologise for detaining the House, even for a few minutes, after the very exhaustive arguments on both sides have been heard with such patient attention.

As I am neither one of the Executive, nor a Representative Member of this House, I have to satisfy my own conscience, and as it is probable I may not have another opportunity of expressing my opinion on the principle of Confederation with Canada, I must beg leave to say a few words.

It will be unnecessary to follow up the subject at any length, as I believe that the principle of Confederation has been virtually conceded. I give the Hon. Member for Victoria District all the credit that may be due for the consistent way in which he has agitated this question for years past, and probably the reason why the matter was not earlier brought to a successful issue through that agitation, was that either he did the right thing in the wrong way, or that he lived before his time. From 1867 to the present time, the question has been discussed in successive sessions of the Council, and it has been declared in effect that, at some future time, Confederation would be of advantage to this Colony. The Imperial Government have now spoken their mind undisturbedly in the matter, and have decided that Confederation shall take place. It seems that those who have the power to shape the destinies of this Colony have decided that it is to take a part in the great scheme of Confederation of the British North American Colonies, and have not hesitated to throw the whole weight of their enormous influence in the scale to effect this object; the Canadian Parliament manifestly urge this matter as a necessary

part of their scheme; and last, though not least, a large portion of the people of this Colony cry aloud for it, as a panacea for all their ills. Downing Street has not hesitated to guide and control the opinions of Her Majesty's Servants in this Colony. Whether this be wise or prudent on the part of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in view of the present constitution of this Colony, it is not for me to say, but it is of no use blinding our eyes to the fact that they who have the power will—and for aught I know should—exercise it.

It was fitting, then, that the Executive of this Colony should take the initiative and undertake the responsibility of placing the matter before the country in a tangible shape. I rejoice that they have done so, and that the working out of the basis of arrangements has fallen into so able hands, for what other party have the power to do so? If they had not pre-occupied the ground, who else there? What party is there in this small community commanding sufficient general respect, that could have undertaken this important duty, with any chance of success?

Now, Sir, the Resolutions before us form no final measure, no unrevocable and perfected conditions. I look upon them simply as the basis of arrangement for the initial step in the negotiation. Before now, if it had been otherwise—if these were proposed as final conditions upon which the people of the Colony would be allowed to pass no vote, over which they would exercise no control. If the Government had said to this Council, you shall have these terms or none, I would have voted against them, or retired from this assembly. But the Governor here? What party is they shall be submitted to a popular vote, and ratified by a really representative and reconstructed Council.

That being so, I can give them my conscientious support, not only because I deem it to be my duty to support every well-considered Government measure, but because I believe them to be, as far as they go, reasonable, fair, and advantageous. Before now, a Government measure has claimed a support, but a reluctant one; in this case it is not so. I trust I may be allowed to render my small tribute of thanks to the Hon. Member for Victoria City, who with great self-denial has undertaken an unenviable position, one which, of necessity, would lay himself open to attack and misrepresentation; one in which he has done and can do great service to his country. I think I can see, in the Resolutions before me, evidences of this service; traces of his handiwork; and although he cannot give the measure his support, I feel sure, though I desire not to penetrate the secrets of that mysterious chamber, that he has done all in his power to render them as beneficial, or rather, as the Hon. Member himself would say, as little hurtful as he could to the best interests of the Colony.

When this subject came up for discussion, in the last Session of this Council, I joined those who were supposed to form the Confederate party, and moved the following Resolution—

“That, however, desirable Confederation with Canada may hereafter become, this Council believes that until the great Territory intervening between this Colony and the Dominion is transferred to the Crown, and contains a larger and more settled population, it would be premature to express any definite opinion on the subject.”

It is unnecessary for me to say anything in favour of the principle of Confederation. It is admitted in the Resolution which I have just read. I take it, Sir, that the obstacle there referred to will be speedily removed; that the small band of disaffected spirits will soon disperse, and that the machinery of Government will shortly be put in motion; and though I do not take pleasure, like the Hon. Member on my left, in revolution, political hatred, agitation, and blood and thunder generally, I am not disposed to regret the occurrence of the difficulty in the Red River, for it will teach the Canadian Government, and the Imperial Government, and all Governments, that though you may buy and sell territories, you cannot transfer the human beings therein, like so many serfs and chattels, to a fresh allegiance with impunity; that the consent of the people must be first obtained; and that though the soil may be sold, the soil is free. This measure was, to a certain extent, forced upon the Government by the people of this Colony. It is said that the people clamoured for change in the Government. Why, Sir, we have had changes enough during the time I have been in the Colony, to ruin any country; changes generally for the worse. [“No, no,” from Mr. DeCosmos.] But whether Confederation comes or not, there is one change more which I hope to see before this year expires, and that is a change in the Constitution of this Council, to enable me to see all the Members, save the Executive Officers,