

of Englishmen to submit to tyranny of any description, and dissent such as our posterity will express, will be on only too sound grounds. I say, Sir, that this matter ought not to be brought forward now, when the country is in a state of depression, ready to catch at anything. Recourse should not be now had to Representative Institutions for the first time, when the obvious effect is the acceptance by this Colony of a confederation which comes with it direct, immediate, pecuniary gain. Few have the self-denial to reject a bait so invitingly dangled before their eyes. If the Colonists are to be trusted with Representative Institutions, for the purpose of effecting so important and radical a constitutional change, why are they not to be trusted with Representative Institutions altogether? It is notorious that the Colony is, probably with justice, considered by the Imperial Authorities unfit for full Representative Institutions, and that a Council, with a predominant official element within it, is the only fit body to deal with important questions. Yet this Council is to be differently constituted, and the ultimate terms to be accepted by the people alone, for the sole purpose of effecting the scheme of Confederation. The whole scheme for effecting Confederation is but a scheme of temptation very difficult to forgo, though it must be admitted recourse is not had to actual or practical force and obligation.

I have delivered my honest opinion on this matter, *liberæ animæ meæ*. I fear at great length. But I have spoken out for my country, and for the benefit of a nation and a spirit, of the truest loyalty. I am desirous to promote the interests of the British Nation; and I believe the present movement puts them in great peril. I have given you the best proof of my sincerity. I have spoken against my own interests. I have material interests in this Colony which will greatly benefit by the movement, and I am a friend of the building of a Railroad and a Dock. The interests of friends and connections who are dear to me will be much benefited; and those who know the world tell me that it would have been better for me if I had bent before the storm which I cannot avoid; that the honours and rewards of my profession are not likely to be bestowed upon one so friendly to a popular, an Imperial, and a Canadian movement; and I cannot act against political conviction. I am here to give honest counsel, and I have done it, come what may.

The question has always appeared to me to be this:—Confederation with England which we have; Confederation in its truest sense; Confederation with all the securities of protection, and all the privileges of government, now or hereafter to be, when the Colony shall have population and wealth sufficient; or Confederation—or as it should be termed "Incorporation"—with Canada. Incorporation with a country to which we are bound by no natural tie of affection or duty, and remote in geographical position, and opposed to us in material interests. Incorporation with all the humiliation of dependence, and in my mind the certainty of reaction, agitation, and discontent. Canada can never become the assignee, the official assignee, the *Dowling Street* official assignee of the affection and loyalty which exists between this dependency and the Mother Country. I am opposed to the political extinction of this Colony, and its subservience to the will of a majority of the House of Commons at Ottawa, and the administration of its affairs by the political adherents of Canadian Statesmen. And all this for what? For "material benefits," for a money consideration, in which the ring of the dollar only faintly conceals the click of the fetter. I am grieved to think in which the change is sought to be effected, and view the bargain and sale of political independence for ourselves and our descendants for a few dollars in hand, and a few dollars in the future, as equally shameful and void.

Railway—or no Railway—consent or no consent—the transfer of Legislative power to Ottawa, to a place so remote in distance, in interest, in industry, and a political extravagance which time will most surely establish.

The Hon. Mr. DeCROMBIE, Member for Victoria District, then rose and said:—Mr. President, I congratulate you, Sir, and this House upon the noble work on which we are engaged. We are engaged, I believe, in Nation-making. For my part I have been engaged in Nation-making for the last twelve years—ever since I have been engaged in politics in the Colony. [Hon. Registrar General.—"You have not made a Nation yet."] The Hon. Registrar General says that I have not made a Nation yet. I need only, in reply, quote for his enlightenment the old

adage "Rome was not built in a day." [Laughter.] In the humble part that I have taken in politics, I have ever had one end in view. I have seen three Colonies united on the Pacific Coast. [Hon. Mr. Helmecken.—"Three?"] Yes, three: Stekin, British Columbia, and Vancouver Island; and if I had had my way, instead of the United States owning Alaska, it would have been British to-day. I have advocated the union of those three Colonies, and in the union of two of them particularly, I have taken a prominent part. For many years I have regarded the union of the British Pacific Territories, and of their consolidation under one Government, as one of the steps preliminary to the grand consolidation of the British Empire in North America. I still look upon it in this light with the pride and feeling of a native-born British American. From the time when I first mastered the institutes of physical and political geography I could see Vancouver Island on the Pacific, from my home on the Atlantic; and I could see a time when the British Possessions, from the United States boundary to the Arctic Ocean, and extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific, would be consolidated into one great Nation.

Sir, my political course has been unlike that of most others in this Colony. Allow me to illustrate my meaning by the use of another old adage. My course has been that of "beating the bush whilst others caught the bird." My allegiance has been to my country, and the only reward I have received has been to see sound political principles in operation. Therefore, Sir, I say again that I congratulate you and this Honourable House on the noble work on which we are all engaged.

We are here, Sir, laying the corner stone of a great Nation on the Pacific Coast. When we look at our history, we find some Nations that state their origin in the age of fable; some have been produced by violence, and extended their empire by conquest. But we are engaged in building up a great Nation in the noon-day light of the nineteenth century, not by violence, not by wrong, but I hope, Sir, by the exercise of that common sense which the Honourable gentleman who preceded me called statesmanship.

It was not my intention, yesterday, to have drawn the attention of this House with any remarks until we were in Committee of the Whole, although I have taken, for historical purposes, ample notes of the debate. Allusions have, however, been made during the course of this debate, amongst others to myself. I am, therefore, compelled to crave the indulgence of the House for a time to set myself right before the Council and the Country, and to add my humble opinion to those around me in favour of the consideration of this question in Committee of the Whole. I shall support the general principle of Confederation, [Hear, hear.] as I have always done, if we get to the discussion of the terms proposed.

First, Sir, let me allude to some of the statements of the Honourables the Attorney General (Mr. Croase) and the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works (Mr. Trutch) and to the Honourable Executive Member for Victoria City (Mr. Helmecken.) Sir, I know something about the history of Confederation. Up to the opening of this Session, Confederation has been a subject of agitation. It may properly be divided into several heads: firstly, agitation; secondly, negotiation; thirdly, inauguration; and fourthly, I hope, successful operation. Now, Sir, it is apparent that every act of mine in reference to Confederation, up to the time it was announced in Earl Grenville's despatch, up to the time His Excellency the Governor sent down his message, every act of mine was in the line of agitation. It was with the view to bring about the consideration of terms with the Dominion Government; to hear what they would do; to bring the question before the people, and to canvass its defects and advantages that I for one have agitated the question. In doing so I have come in for blows from opposition, and from some false political friends. Sir, the era of agitation has now passed, and we advance to the era of negotiation.

When I heard the Hon. Attorney General, yesterday, invoking High Heaven; and when I heard him explaining the position of Official Members upon this question; when I heard him state that he was always in favour of Confederation, there flashed across my mind one of the proverbs of Solomon, which I cannot refrain from repeating: "Such is the way of an adulterous woman; she catcheth and wipeth her mouth and saith I have done no wickedness." [Laughter.] Sir, I respect any Hon. Member who will, if he sees reason to change his opinion, come down and frankly tell the honest truth; but when an Hon. Member tries