

taking from them the means of support; but I should much regret to see any laws brought into operation which would grant monopolies, such, for instance, as in the case of cranberries, which are at present a source of living to many hundreds of Indians.

As regards our defences: we should have the right to have our own forces, as every one would have to serve in the Militia; but so long as English troops are stationed in Canada, we ought, when we become an integral part of the Dominion, to have our share of them. And at no very distant future I trust that the great scheme of Confederation may be carried out, and that the Dominion may have a Royal Prince at its head, and then may the views of the great Anglo-Saxon race as regards commerce and trade become enlightened so that English goods may come into the Dominion duty free.

As we shall, from our position on the Pacific Coast, be the key-stone of Confederation, I hope we may become the most glorious in the whole structure, and tend to our own and England's future greatness.

I shall support the motion of the Honourable the Attorney-General.

The Hon. MR. WOOD said:—Sir, I rise to support the amendment of the Honourable Junior Member for Victoria, to postpone the consideration of these Resolutions for six months. I desire, Sir, to express my unqualified opposition to what is termed the Confederation of this Colony with the Dominion of Canada on the basis of the Organic Act; and in dealing with the subject I shall address myself to three several heads of objection:

Firstly, to the principle of the Organic Act of 1867, as applied to the British North American Provinces;

Secondly, to the special application of the principle to this Colony;

Thirdly, to the mode in which the consent of its adoption is now attempted to be obtained.

Referring for a moment to my own personal position in this Council, I should wish to say that I feel bound as a non-representative and non-official member to present my own views. My mouth is not closed by official reticence, nor do I represent any constituency. I am here, bound by my duty as a Member of this Council, to express my own conscientious views in respect of the measure in explicit terms, in the interests no less of this Colony than of Great Britain, which in this, as in every Colonial question, I cannot but hold to be identical.

With respect to the general principle of Confederation of the British North American Provinces, it will be remembered that, in 1867, I was one of those Members who did vote that Confederation, on fair and equitable terms, was desirable. I am of that opinion still; but my objection is that no terms based on the Organic Act of 1867 can be fair or equitable.

It cannot be denied that the idea of a confederation and general alliance between the British Colonies in North America is a very captivating idea. The existence of a homogeneous nation tending to act as a counterpoise to the great Republic to the south of us, is a grand political idea, but it is an idea most dangerous and difficult to carry out. When I voted in 1867 for Confederation on fair and equitable terms, I had in my mind Confederation in the general acceptance of the word as understood by all political writers and by the world in general—a union of free and self-governed States, united by a federal compact for purposes of offence and defence, of peace and war, and for the purposes of maintaining and preserving uniformity in laws and institutions which affect the social and commercial relation of life; such laws and institutions as criminal law and practice, the general administration of justice, and the laws regulating commerce and navigation. Such a Confederation I then believed to be possible. I am foolish enough to believe it to be possible still; but Confederation as understood by Canadian and Imperial statesmen—Confederation as effected by the Organic Act of 1867—is not Confederation at all. I would, indeed, throw the word Confederation to the winds, since by Confederation is obviously meant union, incorporation, and absorption. The Organic Act of 1867, provides for the entire transfer of all effective legislative power and control to Ottawa, as the seat of the Dominion Government, where, owing to the much 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.