

this subject is that the Colony will derive "material benefit" from Confederation, and the Colony has been offered by the Executive certain material benefits in the shape of a Railway, a Dock, cash in hand, and freedom from debt, in return for the transfer of all legislation to the Dominion of Canada. These "material benefits" being paraded before the eyes of the Colonists, the bargain is afterwards to be accepted or refused by a Council composed mainly of Representative Members. This mode of operation, no less than the bargain itself, is equally objectionable in my eyes. The material benefits—the Dock, the Railway, the money payments—are in effect nothing more than bribes to the present generation to forego the rights of self-government.

I have no doubt that the Colony will accept the bargain. The Colony is a small one, the population not exceeding 6,500 adult white men, and of these many are gentlemen of Canadian proclivities, Canadians by birth, who are naturally, and I may say patriotically, in favour of a union with their native country.

There are many, also, who, in the present adverse condition of things in this Colony, are desirous of change of any kind, and eager for any opportunity of benefiting by operations which promise to throw population, capital, and enterprise into the Colony. We have suffered much from pecuniary depression, and when we have an offer from a great country to come and spend money among us, can you doubt that any one will fail to feel these advantages; while many more hope for political power and eminence in a system which they expect will carry with it Representative Institutions, if not Responsible Government. Can we doubt that the vote will be in favour of Confederation? The people of this country will sell themselves for the consideration of the present, and posterity will hereafter ask indignantly what right had we to shackle them, and to deprive them of rights which cannot be sold.

We shall reap the benefit, and those that come after us will reap the disadvantage and humiliation. It is not in the power of the present generation to dispose of the birthright of its descendants. Liberty and self-government are inalienable rights. The original vice of the matter still remains, and when once the material benefits are enjoyed or forgotten, and the consciousness of disadvantage is apparent, reaction will set in; a party of repudiators and repealers will arise, who with great show of justice will clamorously demand the reversal of an organic change, founded on political error and wrong. Although our masters at Ottawa may be ever so amiable and ever so pure, the moment we feel the yoke we shall repent; it is not in the nature 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 carries 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 forwarding the cause of Confederation. The whole scheme for effecting Confederation is but a scheme of temptation very difficult to forego, 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, *liberavi animam meam*, I fear at great length. But I have spoken according to my conscientious convictions 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 which will ensue from 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 much 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 who is no friend to a popular, an Imperial, and a Canadian movement; but I cannot act against political conviction. I am here to give honest counsel, and I have done it, come what may.