

It is for us to determine those conditions in this House, and, after negotiation upon them with Canada, to submit them to the decision of the popular vote, the people being the parties principally affected by the change, who will have to pass in the last resort, once and forever, upon the whole question.

The circumstances, political, geographical, and social, under which we are at present placed, compel us to political movement in one direction or another, and the question is now—in what direction shall we go?

We are sandwiched between United States Territory to the north and south—indeed on all sides but one, and that one opening towards Canada. Our only option is between remaining a petty, isolated community 15,000 miles from home, ekeing out a miserable existence on the crumbs of prosperity our powerful and active Republican neighbours choose to allow us, or, by taking our place among the comity of nations, become the prosperous western outlet on the North Pacific of a young and vigorous people, the eastern boundary of whose possessions is washed by the Atlantic.

This is the only option left to faithful subjects of the British Crown.

Now look at our condition as a Colony, with a climate far finer than any other in the world, with magnificent harbours, rivers, seas, and waters for inland navigation, with unrivalled resources of almost every description you can name—coal, lumber, spars, fish, and furs—mines of gold, silver, copper, lead, cinnabar, tin, and almost every other mineral throughout the land; with a soil and climate admirably adapted to pastoral and agricultural pursuits—with almost every natural advantage which the lavish hand of Nature can bestow upon a country—the undoubted fact remains:—

We are not prosperous.

Population does not increase.

Trade and commerce languish; coal mining does not advance; agriculture, though progressive, does not go forward as it might.

The settlement of the country, though increasing, yet falls short of just expectations.

No public works for opening the country are on hand, and a general lack of progress (that is, proportioned to the extraordinary resources of the Colony) is everywhere apparent.

And why is this?

It is not, as some allege, because of the particular form of Government we at present enjoy (if it were, Confederation in that would effect a change).

It has among other things a Public Debt altogether disproportioned to our means.

Our close proximity to an active and powerful neighbour whose interests are foreign to our own. ["Hear, hear," from Dr. Helmcken.] But the chief reason of all is that policy of isolation which has kept us aloof from the assistance and sympathy of a kindred race, and left us in the infant state of one of England's youngest Colonies, to support the burdens and responsibilities of a thickly peopled and long settled land.

Do Honourable Members ask what would Confederation do for us?

It would at once relieve us from the most if not all the present ills from which we suffer, if properly arranged.

For Confederation in some sense means terms. It would assume our Public Debt.

Greatly increase our Public Credit, and thereby aid in the utilization of our varied resources.

It would leave us a *good balance* in our Exchequer to carry on all local works and open out the country.

It would give us a Railroad across the Continent, and a quick and easy access to Ottawa, New York, and London.

It would cement and strengthen, instead of weaken, our connection with the Mother-land, and ensure the protection of her Fleet and Army.

It would attract population, ever tending in a continuous wave towards the West.

It would promote the settlement of our Public Lands, and the development of Agriculture.

Under it Trade and Commerce would take a fresh start. It would enlarge, not contract, our political horizon, and it would infuse new hope and life blood into the whole system of the Colony, and not leave us a mere detached Municipality, as some suppose, any more than Scotland is separate from the rest of Great Britain, or the County of Kent from England.

I leave to others to dilate upon the advantages which Canada would derive from the connection, the possession of a Far West (Canada's great want) into which her rapidly increasing population may pour, instead of going to swell the bulk of the adjoining States.