

I do not see any reason now to change my opinion. I do not say that Confederation must be bad for all time, the time may come when it will be a benefit or a necessity; but at present, I do not believe that Confederation would be a benefit to British Columbia. The time has not yet arrived for it. I was sent to this Council as an opponent of Confederation. I oppose it from conviction, and I shall still continue to oppose it.

The question of Confederation has been advocated by certain parties for some years past, and why? Because there has been a general feeling of dissatisfaction throughout the Colony, a general feeling of pressure from heavy taxation on a daily diminishing basis. The people have been suffering under a desire for change; that is what is at the bottom of this discussion.

Confederation has been discussed outside, in the public press, and in other places, and now, after years of agitation, by secret and unknown partizans, it has cropped up in this Council as a Government measure. I know, Sir, that I have no chance of carrying this amendment. I have not the slightest hope of carrying it, but I move it with the view of bringing the question fairly before the public. I should deeply regret that this Council should be able to bind the Colony for ever. The question is one of the greatest magnitude, greater by far than any other which has ever come before this Legislature. I am glad that it must hereafter be referred to another Council, the majority of whose members will have to come before the people for election. I think, however, that it is waste of time to bring this measure before this Council.

There are some points in Confederation, I admit, which are worthy of consideration, or would be under different circumstances. The idea of consolidating the British Possessions on this Continent, is an idea which is likely to carry people away. The idea of assisting to found a large and wide-spreading country might be dazzling to some. But if we are to be turned over to Canada with no change in our form of Government, no alteration in the management of our political affairs, where is the advantage of any change. It will simply be a change from "King Stork" to "King Log." The Officials will be chosen by the Dominion Government instead of the Crown; we should be transferred from the rule of Statesmen at Downing Street to that of Politicians at Ottawa. ["No, no," from Mr. DeCosmos.] All our political rights will be taken away, the whole of the legislation will pass out of our hands into that of the Dominion at Ottawa; those laws upon which we shall be entitled to pass an opinion, will be much of the same nature as those upon which a municipality or vestry may vote; but which are beneath the dignity of a Colony. All power of raising taxes, except as the Hon. Member for the District reminds me, for provincial purposes, we shall be subject to the provisions of the Organic Act, which we have no power to change. Any terms which we can impose, must be subject to the provisions of "The British North America Act." My position, therefore, is correct, when I say that our power will not exceed that of a municipality. We are told that we are not fit for Representative Institutions or Responsible Government. Then we shall go into the Dominion as a Crown Colony—bound hand and foot. The few Members that will represent us at Ottawa, will not have the power to do anything for us. I do not trust the Politicians of Ottawa. I do not desire to give them the power to raise money upon our vast and rich territory, whilst we should get nothing from Canada in return. I would rather remain as we are, with some change and modification in our Government.

I admit that Confederation offers great advantages to those Provinces which are contiguous to Canada; there they have a mutuality of interests; they are able to use the products of the Dominion; they have community of interests; and there is no extent of wild, unsettled country between them and the seat of Government. We are divided by upwards of 4,000 miles from Halifax, 2,000 of which is an unknown wilderness. Some explorers who have travelled by that route say, that the greater part of the country is alkaline and unfit for settlement. There is, no doubt, a large tract of fertile land in the valley of the Saskatchewan, but much of the intervening territory is unknown. I ask, Sir, is not our position as a territory of Great Britain, far in advance of what it would be as a Province of the Dominion? Will not the change operate disadvantageously?

We know that our interests can hardly conflict with those of Great Britain; can we say the same as regards the Dominion. Canada is hampered by her vast territory, and the larger that territory becomes, the greater her weakness will be. But, Sir, I ask of what use is this vast territory, unpeopled and uncultivated. Canada wants population and capital; this Colony wants the same. Upon looking at the returns of population, I find that two-thirds of the emigrants go over the border to the United States, and many native-born Canadians go to the United States, because they find there a more genial climate, and more work to do. If Canada teemed