

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 security of protection, and all the pride of self-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 to my mind the certainty of reaction, agitation, and discontent. Canada can never become the *assignee*, the *official assignee*, the *Downing 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 clink of the fetter. I am grieved at the mode 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 and in interest, is an injustice and a political extravagance which time will most surely establish.

The Hon. Mr. DeCOSMOS, 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. Helmcken—“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 principle, and the only reward I have asked or sought 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 past history, we find some nations that date 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 taken up 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 this Council and the country, and to add my