

minds of some readers. The Government, knowing well how much the people fear direct taxes, tell them that Confederation involves them in no such risk. What new method are they going to invent then for raising money? It is perfectly clear that Confederation will largely increase our expenditure. Then, for instance, Canada, which has now but one Government to maintain (and it is as much as she can do to maintain it), will have three to maintain, or nearly so: the Government of Upper Canada, the Government of Lower Canada, and nine-twelfths of the Federal Government; it will be the same as regards the legislatures. Canada, with a population forming nine-twelfths of the Confederation, will have to build nine-twelfths of the Intercolonial Railway, in place of the five-twelfths she was to have been charged with, under the arrangements of 1863. With reference to the opening of the all but boundless territory of the North-West, and the construction of the fortifications which are spoken of only in whispers as yet, lest we should become alarmed, it is impossible to calculate the expenditure these works will involve. And, in face of this increased expenditure, our chief source of revenue is to be considerably diminished. I refer to the import customs duties. Here is the justification offered by the Minister of Finance for the reduction:—

It is evident since the Atlantic Provinces consume a far larger quantity of articles paying import duties than we do, that we shall be compelled, in order to assimilate all the customs tariffs, to diminish the import duties we pay in Canada. The Atlantic Provinces cannot adopt a customs tariff so high as ours.

I think I have shown that our expenditure must infallibly increase; and as our revenue will diminish, to what new tax will the Government have recourse in order to make up the deficit? We are told that Lower Canada will have a revenue of nearly a million and a half to meet her local expenditure; with what shall we meet our proportion of the Federal expenditure, which will be far larger? But I shall now deal with the advantages which we are told must certainly result from Confederation. They may be divided into three classes—political, military and commercial. The honorable member for Montmorency tells us that we are to have the advantage of a seat at the banquet of nations. The perspective is a highly flattering one, I admit, but we must be

permitted to take a common-sense view of it. The Honorable Minister of Finance, faithful to the doctrine that the greatness of a State is proportioned to the greatness of its debt, announces to us that our credit will be considerably increased, and that we shall be enabled to borrow much more extensively than we have hitherto done, a prospect at which he seems greatly to rejoice. This facility of borrowing is not always an unmixed good; but it must be remembered that our credit will depend entirely on the success of our Confederation. If it should not succeed, if any serious difficulty should arise within it—a thing which is possible—public opinion will be more prompt to take alarm, in that our Federal form of government does not afford strong guarantees for the maintenance of order and peace, and our credit will soon be worth less than the credit of a single province is worth to-day. The Honorable the President of the Council enumerated all our provinces, comparing one after another, as regards superficial extent, with the great states of Europe. He finished with the Hudson's Bay territory, stating that it is as large as European Russia; but will it ever be capable of supporting, like European Russia, a population of sixty millions, and feeding, with its surplus corn, a great part of Europe? The vastness of territory in which the honorable minister takes so much pride is precisely what inspires me with uneasiness; we shall have the outward form of a giant, with the strength of a child; we shall be unable to stand up. Hasty and premature growth is as fatal to states as it is to men; a state should extend its limits only in proportion as its strength increases. The Roman Empire did not attain in a day its colossal proportions; its growth, like that of the oak, was slow but sure. Let us not allow ourselves to be dazzled by the ambition of becoming all at once a great people; the United States are a great people, but where is the people, however small it may be, that now envies their greatness? Let us be content with our lot; few nations have a better one. The territorial formation of the future Federation will also be an insurmountable obstacle to the establishment of a strong government; it amounts to a deformity. I give the following passage in support of this proposition:—

What may the geographical advantages of the Union be? We speak more as regards the future than as regards the present. If the provinces it