Hon Mr Pemberton—I think, sir, the matter cannot now be postponed, let us fight it out and have done with it.

Hon Mr Horner—I say, sir, that the debate may be postponed, and if the government vote is given against the postponement we shall know the reason.

Hon Mr Harvard—The hon Chief Commissioner said that he should take an adverse vote on this resolution as a vote of want of confidence. I don't want this. Won't hon government members help us?

Hon Mr Cambell—The opposition say that the government ought not to have put such a resolution on the terms, let us take that issue.

Hon Mr Harvard—It was not my desire to hamper the government; I desired to give a hearty support to the government, and, at the same time, to do my duty to my constituents. I have never felt the weight of responsibility as I feel it to day. I feel that I am about casting a vote which will affect for weal or woe the destiny of this the Province. I am convinced that it is a majority of the elected members of this Council vote aye to day on this question, responsible government will be integrated conjointly with Confederation. It is beyond a question that the infinite portion of the community are in favor of responsible government, but there is a grave question in regard to its adaptation to the colony. Its wonderful coming from its excellency is a warrant of exceptional caution. They contain strong reasons against the introduction of responsible government. Public opinion is not settled on the Island. The hon senior member for Victoria only has shown in his remarks that there is a great want of settled principle in the colony. The new Island members, Victoria are averse to taking upon themselves the duties and labor of legislating for the country. Men of standing and wealth stand aloof. The merchants, manufacturers and professional men take no interest in the matter of legislation. There is a great difficulty in getting good representative men. There are, I admit, many good reasons which might be urged against the measure, and I have no doubt the dissatisfaction, to a certain extent, ensue. I agree with the Commissioner of Lands and Works, in his remarks about the great interest the public unfavorably to the government, but the blame is not in the measure but in that system of government which keeps the ballot silent. The members of the government ought to be in a position to defend themselves both by pen and speech. I have glances at a few reasons against the adoption of responsible government, but I will now look at the other side. Look at the fact of all the larger subjects, under control, being dealt with by the Federal power. The fact of us all in advancing an argument at we need. What hon member can go to his constituents and tell them that we think the local business of this colony could be managed better at Ottawa than it can be by ourselves? The official members of this government will no doubt avail themselves of the retiring pension, and appoint men from Ottawa will take their places. Will those latter officials have to be pensioned off by this colony when we adopt responsible government? This is a strong objection to entering the union under a system like the present. This colony may be asked to pension another set of officials. Will the people be satisfied with this sort of government if we are to have appointees from Ottawa? There are a class of men who oppose Confederation on this ground. They would prefer remaining as they are, with the officials nominated from Downing-street, rather than from Ottawa. It is often asserted that this colony is not ready. How long are we to wait? Canada was told the same story when she had a population of 600,000. All the other Provinces were told the same thing. Must we wait for such an increase, or must we fight as did Canada? Throw us on our own resources as a colony and we will soon learn valuable lessons in the science of government. There were gentlemen of good families and of good education, who came here in early days, who had never suffered privations of any sort before they came here; sent out to make fortunes, or, at all events, homes for themselves; their ploughing it was rough indeed; bad news had come from the mines, the avenues of trade were closed there were no agricultural pursuits for them to turn to, the consequence was that they had to be found hotels; after failing to get government employment, I ask, which, as a matter of course, they applied, some kept bars whose waiting for from Canada. The reason was that they never had been taught self-reliance; we shall be in the same position if we are constantly to have ships from England, or Canada, but throw us on our own resources and we shall succeed. Self-reliance is the best means of education in politics as in anything else. If our rulers are sent us from England or Ottawa we will always lack self-reliance. Self-reliance is written on every line of the British North American Act. Rely upon yourselves, is the cry of the people of England. It is hard to grapple with the difficulties now when the issues are small and comparatively unimportant, and should we make blunders they will not be so serious when our interests are small; and for what errors we do commit, the consequences will fall upon ourselves. We will, no doubt, blunder at first, as there may be chaff blown here. If responsible government will bring the scum to the top, dross will go to the bottom. The scum will be blown out—the chaff will be blown away by the breath of public opinion. The Governor's promises of a majority will not satisfy the people, and we should therefore urge upon his Excellency to give us responsible government. I am not in favor, however, of making that condition a sine qua non of Confederation. I would accept confederation with good terms, even without responsible government. There may be a few arguments against it, but the reasons are in its favor. Under more circumstances would I like Confederation and responsible government to go to the polls together. I hope the people will never the two. Let us have Confederation and we shall get responsible government.

Hon Mr Wood—In rising to address myself to the motion now before this Committee, I do so with a double object: I feel myself challenged to uphold my opinion on the subject of responsible government as applied to this colony, and I am desirous to add a few words to the hearing of the subject in the matter of Confederation now before the Council. 1st With respect to the subject of responsible government. As to this, sir, my views have been for a long time settled, and I shall endeavor to explain them as clearly as I can, the result of some experience in a low walk. I am in favor of the extension of representative institutions little by little, to the utmost verge of safety. But I am opposed to this community at least, to the establishment of what is called responsible government. These are my views shortly. I believe them to be the settled convictions of most moderate and experienced men not bound to flatter popular constituencies. And I believe I am doing a service to society in upholding such moderate views against the popular error and the popular bias in favor of the rash application of responsible government in such communities. I will start, sir, at once from an historical point of view. The hon member for New Westminster has, as I understand him, asserted that responsible government is the immemorial birthright of Englishmen, and that the principle of Cabinet ministers going in and out with votes of a majority of the House of Commons is a principle of ancient date. My understanding of the history of my country leads to a different conclusion and however much it may be clear and obvious that representative institutions are our birthright and inalienable birthright—however much it may be established that the power of self taxation resides and has always resided in the representatives of the county, in the Commons of England, carrying with it the one whelming power of the purse—it is, I believe clearly admitted that the principle of responsible government, as now understood, has existed for little more than 100 years, say from the accession of George III and the termination of Lord North's administration, so that I admit the hon gentleman's proposition only so far as this. Representative institutions and the birthright of the British nation representative institutions and the privilege of taxing ourselves. Now, sir I believe this whole scope of representative institutions to be greatly misrepresented. It is the fashion for honorable members to say, that the Government of this or any other community are bound to govern according to the well understood wishes of the people; that the vox populi is the vox dei; that ministries and Governments are responsible to the people. But the true principle, as we all very well know, is that Governments and ministries are responsible, not to the people as a people, but to the representatives of the people, properly and reasonably chosen. Governments and ministries are responsible not to numerical majorities, but to the country. Now, sir, representative institutions are liable to this obvious and well known danger. I will quote the words of a well known political writer, Herbert Spencer "Whenever the profit accruing to the Representative individually, from the passage of a mischievous measure largely exceeds his loss as a unit in the community from the operation of the injurious law, his interest becomes antagonistic to that of his constituents, and sooner or later will sway his vote." How true and how obvious this is. I might go further with the private and personal, the direct and immediate interest of the representatives of the constituents, whose advocates and delegates they are, is opposed to any matter of legislative action. The direct and material interest will of a certainty prevail over the distant and more remote welfare of the community, in all but very rare instances. This is the danger that threatens all representative institutions, and the only safeguard against it is the qualification—the pecuniary and material qualification of the representative, the pecuniary and material qualifications of the elector, and accordingly we see representative institutions flourishing and successful only when this safeguard practically exists. Let us turn to the example of England. In England representative institution and responsible Government work smoothly. And why? Because of the peculiarly aristocratic and democratic character of the Legislature of Great Britain. Political life is a sealed book to any but the wealthy classes. Every member of Parliament is a man of property, no other can afford the luxury of legislative life, and society is so constrained in the hands of representatives whose property would suffer from the results of vicious or reckless legislation. I say nothing of the question of peace and war, probably the most momentous and dread consequent of vicious and reckless legislation, a question which will not arise in the colony. The one great legislation is taxation, and my solid conviction is that representative institutions and responsible Government will fail whenever the working majority is in the hands of an unsubstantial class of Representatives or of electors. I have thus, sir, treated of representative institutions and responsible Government somewhat in the abstract. I will now refer more particularly to its application to this colony, and this apart from any question of Confederation, and I will repeat that I am in favor of the extension to the utmost possible limit of the representative elements of this Council, but adverse to responsible Government. With respect to the constitution of the Legislative Council of British Columbia it might, I think, have been a wise necessary in the present condition of the colony, to devote a second chamber—a Council as distinct from an Assembly. However advisable this may be in an advanced condition of the colony, advanced in numbers and wealth, few, if any would advocate such an institution as a second chamber. The reasons for forming such a chamber are sadly wanting in the present state of affairs, and the matter may be dismissed without further comment—without discussing the advisability in a general way of such an institution at all, or the constitutional elements of such a body. But with regard to the Legislature on the supposition of its consisting of one single House, it will be necessary to speak at somewhat greater length. Of what elements ought such a legislative body to consist? At present it consists of official members, heads of departments official members not heads of departments but representing for the most part different Magisterial districts, a few nominated members—nominated, I think it is reasonable to presume, from an impression of their being tolerably intelligent and moderate—and a few representative members.

It is asked which of the constitution of this Council should be altered so as to set before direct responsible government, or what may be looked upon almost as its equivalent, a large working majority of responsible members. I love out of the question at present, all reference to any modification of the constitution of the Council in the event of Confederation, and I consider the matter at present, only in reference to the Council and the colony in their actual position. At present it is obvious, and must be felt by all of us, by official members no less than by independent members, that our position as a Crown Colony, is what is commonly called a false position. We are individually as well fitted for self-government as our brothers or our cousins in the Old country or in Canada. I will go further: I will say that the community taken individually in this colony is as far advanced to demand and have representative institutions. I say taken individually—and I mean it in its strict sense. Man for man, I believe the colonist is better politicians than his English cousin. This aristocratic class hardly exists in truth. It is an injustice to presume for a moment that the colonist in this, or any other colony of Anglo saxon origin is in any way unfit for the enjoyment of the freest political liberty. Higher classes we have none, but the middle and lower classes are, I do not hesitate to say it, superior to the middle and lower classes at home. The colonist is more enterprising, and more pushing than the stay at home Englishman. He has better knowledge of the world and of human nature, he graduates in a school in which politics are prominent, and he is free from an immense amount of ignorance and prejudice which is thought and written and acted in the old world. But then comes the consideration, what elements are indispensable in the community to form the representative body, if as is mooted, that element is to be supreme, or what is the same thing in point of actual power, when that element constitutes the working majority? I will answer, I. Local and permanent