

Election. We know that the Home Authorities were more anxious that this Colony should go into Confederation, than they were, some time ago, that we should have six additional members in this House; therefore, it was quite probable that they might have instructed His Excellency to dissolve the Assembly, and test the question of Confederation at the polls.

Hon. Mr. DAVIES.—I wish to say a word in reply to the hon. member for Charlottetown (Mr. Brecken). The hon. member said that we were carrying on the Government on principles different from those formerly adopted by the Liberal party.

Mr. PROWSE.—As defined by yourselves.

Hon. Mr. DAVIES.—Responsible Government has been so ably defined by my hon. friend, the Attorney General, it is quite unnecessary for me to go further into the matter, as I endorse his opinions on that subject. Responsible Government is supposed to be the well-understood wishes of the people, as expressed through their Representatives. This side of the House is not now composed of the old Liberal party. There is a good deal of new blood infused into it. There are not so many of the old party on the floor of this House as formerly, but there are gentlemen on this side of the House who are prepared to serve their country faithfully. The hon. member for Charlottetown has said that the Hon. the Colonial Secretary is not here. I am happy to inform that hon. member that he soon will.

Hon. LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION.—The Hon. Attorney General has favored us with a definition of Responsible Government, as given from a Nova Scotian stand-point of view. I, however, am in favor of the home-manufactured article. In 1859, the Liberals were defeated at the polls, and the Conservatives came into power. Previous to that time there were only twenty-four members in this House, a large proportion of whom were officeholders. Some questions arose which showed that the principle of having six or seven officeholders on the floors of this House gave the government of the day an undue influence, and the people declared in favor of excluding all officials from the Legislature. When the Conservatives came into power, they carried out their pledges by forming a Government, without any of its officers having seats in either branch of the Legislature; and for so doing they were told that they had mutilated Responsible Government—that they had crushed out its life's blood. During the first Session which they were in power, a question of importance—the nature of which I do not now remember—came before the House, and an hon. gentleman—who was then a member of this branch of the Legislature, but who is now, like Mahomet's coffin with respect to heaven or earth, neither in nor out of this House—expressed his views on this point in very strong terms. Then we heard quite a different definition of Responsible Government from that which we have received to-day. Under the first Administration formed by that hon. gentleman, the Colonial Secretary, Treasurer, Commissioner of Public Lands, Collector of Customs, and others, down to the Registrar of Deeds, were members of the Legislature; and because these officers were excluded by the Conservatives from holding seats either in this House or in the Legislative Council, I find by the *Parliamentary Reporter* of 1859, that he expressed himself as follows:

Hon. Mr. CONES.—Under the present mongrel system of Government, every member of it is as much bound to support it, as was any head of a department under the previous system, so that the argument about the greater freedom from improper influences fell to the ground. There should be three or four heads of departments in the House, and I regret that the leader of the Government has not accepted the office to which he was so fully entitled; and I believe, that sooner than have allowed him to retire as a representative, had he taken office, a majority

of his friends would have returned him here as an official. I should like to see every member of the Executive holding office, and I would rather see their number reduced to five, with offices, than as at present. This Government is a disgrace to the Colony, and a laughing stock to our neighbors. I say not this in reference to the individuals composing it, but to the principle on which it is constituted. The people will not remain long satisfied with the system of dispensing the patronage among the relatives of members of the Executive. Such has not been the course pursued in the other Colonies; and in Nova Scotia, Mr. Johnston, to whom the hon. member has referred, did not adopt it when he succeeded to power, but carried out the constitutional system, which is as near an approximation to the British as the difference between Imperial and Colonial institutions will admit. At present, a person coming from the country, having business with the Government, may be unable to see members of the Council; while, until recently, if the Governor was in his office, a Council could be formed at once from the officers in the building; but now the Governor cannot hold confidential communication with his principal officers, because they are not his advisers.

Now, Mr. Chairman, with a party in power, under the leadership of the same hon. gentleman who enunciated these views in 1859, we look around this House in vain to see either the Colonial Treasurer, the Commissioner of Public Lands, the Collector of Customs, or the Registrar of Deeds. A change, certainly, has come over the spirit of their dream. In this case, verily the men of yesterday are not the men of to-day.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL.—It requires a good deal of political experience to arrive at correct conclusions. We have had sixteen years' experience of Responsible Government, and have been endeavoring to work it out according to the well-understood wishes of the people, as expressed through their Representatives in this House; and, Sir, the events of the past teach us that we must look for change of views with politicians, as with other men. What did we see in England last year? and what do we see this year? Look at Mr. Gladstone, last year, and his opponents. He was driven from office, not, Sir, because the Conservatives feared his Bill would increase the constituencies too much, for now they themselves have brought in a Bill making yet larger increase. I am not, however, going to say that Mr. D'Israeli and Lord Derby are doing what is wrong. They are merely bowing to the expressed will of the people. So we see Mr. D'Israeli openly and zealously advocating measures to which he was formerly opposed, and advocating them, too, in his place in Parliament. Sir Robert Peel, also, carried the Repeal of the Corn Laws, although he, at one time, was opposed to that measure.

Hon. LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION.—He was converted; you are not.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL.—I will ask the hon. member for Charlottetown if he was not a member of the Political Alliance. If the hon. member will say he was not, then I will bow to his statement.

Mr. BRECKEN.—I was.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL.—Then that Association advocated vote by ballot.

Mr. BRECKEN.—I did not say that I would support the ballot, although I was a member of the Alliance.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL.—The only question I ask is, was the hon. member connected with the Political Alliance? He says that he was, and it is no use for him now to say that his sentiments were, on any point, opposed to the charter of the association. We cannot accept of any personal declarations of differences of opinion in another way. If a person belongs to an association, and makes use of it, I say it is just to state that he assents to, and is responsible for, the principles