

ected by the people; and this change is promised by the Governor.

I hope, also, that the Colony will so prosper, and the population so increase, that before many years another change will come, that is to say Responsible Government. At present, I believe we are not fitted for it; it is practically impossible, and the Governor has had the courage to declare it. I would gladly believe that the cry for this panacea for all evil does not come from those who would vainly jump into vacant places, and enjoy what are pleased to term bloated idleness. Such pharisaic patriotism was so well exposed by my much abused friend at the bottom of the table (Dr. Heineken), that I will not further allude to it. But I say, Sir, that if they can find public servants who will perform their duties better and more perfectly, let them in God's name come on. I am content, for one, to give place to better men. Now is the opportunity offered. But, Sir, I am rejoiced that this measure has come down from the Executive; it will, when accomplished, give us rest I hope from this exasperating change. The farmer, the artisan, the capitalist, and the merchant will know what to expect, and will make their plans accordingly. Years ago, the farmer naturally expected that the Free Port system was settled and approved of. Agitation commenced, the farmer and the merchant could not carry on their pursuits without anxiety, and the Colony suffered. The Free Port was abolished, that grand position with the United States, British Columbia was effected, and a heavy tariff imposed, and business calculations were confounded again. But this Colony and the people have such elastic force, that they are again beginning to settle themselves down to the new order of things. Business went on, it is true, but, nevertheless, it suffered; and for the last two years, the Colony has again been at work. The farmer is cheered; he is prosperous at present, but he dreads (unnecessarily I think) what will be virtually to him the Free Port system again; and so alarm, and change, and uneasiness are for ever distracting this small and struggling Colony, which, unless it had immense vital energy, and enormous latent strength, would long have again succumbed. I see, however, in the prospect before us, a sign of better things—a more hopeful future—a state which when consummated will, I believe, secure a more settled life to the Colony.

I do not fear for the agricultural interest, for I believe the only protection which the farmer requires, is the protection of good roads, good laws, and an easy communication with the markets where he may best dispose of his produce. Self-interest, if no other reason, will induce the Canadian Government so to modify the Tariff as to enlarge as little as possible the various interests, agricultural and otherwise, of the Colony. I firmly believe that Canada will deal justly with us at any rate. It is our duty to deal frankly and in a friendly spirit with the Canadians, until we see signs of a contrary spirit animating them. I am ready to shake hands across the Rocky Mountains with our Canadian brethren; let us not open negotiations with clenched fists.

As regards the paucity of representation allowed to us in the Dominion Parliament, after what has been shown so clearly to us by the Hon. Member for Victoria District of the analogous right of representation enjoyed by the Pacific States of the American Union, I think we cannot rightly expect more.

My Hon. friend on my right (Mr. Wood), who certainly has placed the objections and arguments against Confederation forcibly before the House, says that Confederation means an union of equal States, self-governed, and is equivalent to absorption. I doubt whether this is historically correct. But, Sir, whether that be so or not is beside the question, for the Resolutions which are before us are in fact Resolutions for the Union of this Colony with Canada. Union is the term used in the Organic Act, and the term Confederation never once occurs. It is Union we are seeking, not Confederation. The American States are States of the Union, not of the Confederation, and it has been conclusively shown that in that Country the separate States are not absorbed, although united.

And again, Sir, we were told that we are selling our independence, and transferring our loyalty. Not himself it. If the people of this Country put the measure, surely their verdict is not one of slavery, unless they be slaves themselves, and yet they are free to act. This measure will not pass unless the people of this Colony are willing that it should, and declare unmistakably that it is for their benefit.

Whatever I may individually think, I shall bow to the free popular decision, and be prepared to believe that the *vox populi* is the *vox dei*. In so great a measure, I trust the people may be guided to a right conclusion.

As to loyalty, I need add no more than has already been said so forcibly by the Hon. Attorney General and the Hon. Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works. I pointed in to the north and south by a great advantage—different allegiance to our own; forced back to the sea to west, the only direction in which loyal hearts can turn is to the rising people of the east, who ask us to unite in a friendly spirit with them, to form a great Nation. May that union prove a source of strength to us and them.

I shall give to the Government measure a hearty support, reserving, however, to myself the right of suggesting any amendments or improvements, or of supporting any recommendations which may appear to me to be necessary or desirable.

From the position which I hold in this Council as an Officer of the Government, I have deemed it right to make this statement of the course which I propose to follow in this great and momentous subject, and I maintain it to be perfectly conscientious and perfectly consistent with my previous conduct.

The Hon. Mr. DEWDNEY, Member for Kootenay, rose and said:—Mr. President, I have purposely waited until this late stage of the debate in order to avail myself of the opportunity of listening to the arguments that have been adduced both for and against the scheme of Confederation as sent down for our consideration by His Excellency the Governor, and particularly for the reason that I have not been in a position (from my long absence in the Kootenay County) of making myself acquainted with the subject as it should like to have done.

As the debate progressed, I felt more and more that I had been right in so doing, as I have now the benefit of the well considered opinions and arguments of so many Honourable Members; and upon these able arguments I have in a great measure been guided in coming to the conclusion which I propose to explain.

And now, Mr. President, I think it is incumbent on me to state the course I intend to take with regard to the subject.

I feel I have a most responsible duty to perform, not only to my constituents, but to myself and the country generally.

With regard to my constituents, I feel that I am placed in a rather peculiar position, and I regret that I have had no opportunity of communicating with them since Confederation has assumed the phase it now does.

You are aware, I presume, Mr. President, that I was selected, unsolicited on my part, to represent the Kootenay District in this Council. At that election Confederation was made the test question, and I can assure you that at that time the feeling of the majority of my constituents was opposed to Confederation with the Dominion of Canada.

At a subsequent period—only a few months ago—a petition, connected in this city, was dispatched to Kootenay for the purpose of obtaining signatures in favour of Confederation. It was, however, unfavourably received, the party circulating it was roughly handled, and the petition returned a blank. I mention this to show you that up to a late period my constituents held the same views with regard to Confederation that they did some eighteen months ago.

Shortly after this petition had been dispatched to Kootenay, as just mentioned, I wrote my constituents, requesting them to advise me fully with regard to their wants and wishes; and, in reply, I received a communication setting forth what they specially desired that I should assist in obtaining for them, but not one word on the subject of Confederation.

I have now before me the terms submitted by His Excellency the Governor at the Executive Council, as well as the paragraph in His Excellency's Speech, referring to those terms; and I must say that had I resided as near my constituents as the Honourable Members for Victoria and Nanaimo Cities do to theirs, I should most certainly have sought an opportunity of meeting them and obtaining some expression of their opinions on the now altered position of the question. But as the remoteness of my District has rendered such a course impossible, it is only left for me to exercise my own judgment.

I wish to cast no reflections on the Hon. Members referred to, and with regard to the Hon. senior Mem-