

no Chaplain to this House, supplied the defect by invoking the blessing of God, which was met by a sneer. I say I admire his courage in fronting a godless age, by the invocation of the blessing of Him in whom we live and move and have our being. He was not ashamed to acknowledge the controlling power of Heaven over the destinies of this fallen Colony.

Now, Sir, the Attorney-General descanted at great length on the advantages of Union. He put that as the basis of the Government proposition. There is nothing like Union he says; this is a noble sentiment which all must join in. Everyone would welcome that comprehensive brotherhood which embraces all civilized Nations. I am sure that when the Hon. Member for Victoria alluded to the possibility of a prospective union with other Powers, he did not do so in the idea of this Colony abandoning its allegiance to the Crown; because he expressed a wish to see the desire of general union spreading, is no reason that he should desire to shake off his connection with the Mother Country. Had it been otherwise, I should have deplored the Hon. gentleman's loss of loyalty. Some surprise has existed at the Hon. Member for Victoria offering suggestions as to the possibility of any other union. Why so? The Hon. Attorney-General himself gracefully introduced it. Why should not the English-speaking race live in peace and form one nation? The people of the United States spring from one common stock with ourselves. I long to see the time when all national sectarianism shall be swept away.

My position as Member for Nanaimo has been assailed in a cowardly way by what is called the Press. I have been accused of shrinking from my duty to my constituents at Nanaimo, because I echoed their sentiments against Confederation. I ask the indulgence of the House whilst I allude to what occurred at Nanaimo at the last election. At that time the question of Confederation was rife throughout the Colony; people's minds were agitated; the people of Nanaimo were almost unanimous against it. In what I said to them during the progress of the election, and also on the hustings, I told them that I agreed with their views against Confederation, but that when it came before the Council I should give it my best attention. It was not made a test question at my election. The people of Nanaimo are still of their original opinion; and, therefore, I express their opinion now, against this measure; and say that their convictions are against Confederation, notwithstanding the "No, noes" of certain Hon. Members. There may be some amongst them, Canadians by birth and principle, who desire Confederation, who, though they are here, can say with the poet:—

"Where ere I roam, whatever realms I see,
My heart untravell'd fondly turns to thee."

Thus much for Nanaimo.

Now, I say, Sir, that the question of Confederation ought to be fully and amply discussed in this House, and to do this there should be a full House. I deny that it is the desire of the people to have Confederation, but I say let the people have an opportunity of expressing their opinions in this House. Let the disfranchised districts have first restored to them the rights of which they have been defrauded. The Governor has been betrayed into supposing that the people want Confederation, and assuming this to be true, he says I shall now give the people an opportunity to discuss the terms.

But let the Franchise be restored, then let the general question of Confederation come before an enlarged representation; and I say that Confederation should be put alone, aye or no. Shall we have Confederation? and not upon what terms shall we have it. The proper course is to dissolve the House, issue new writs, and let the people say whether they want Confederation; and after they have said yes, then descend into the particulars of it. A Government measure is now proposed, we are bound hand and foot, and handed over to Ottawa. I say, Sir, that being so handed over, we ought to let our masters settle the terms for us.

I, therefore, venture again, Mr. President, to repeat that if it is to go abroad that the people desire Confederation, then the House should be dissolved, and a fair vote taken.

The Hon. Member for Victoria District puts it as if the voice of the people had been heard. I ask how? Through newspapers? Conventions? Speeches? I say this is not the proper way. Let the people speak in this House, through a full body of Representatives of their own choosing.

The question has been amply ventilated in this Council. The Hon. Member for Victoria City has gone fully into what he considers the difficulties. He has been met on the other side in a manly and able reply by the Hon. Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, who has been again met by the Hon. Mr. Wood.