

It is not for me to go into the question of terms now; but I deny emphatically that Confederation is desired by the people. My own constituents are against it; many other constituencies are, as I believe, against it also.

I ask, then, why should the Government attempt to force these Resolutions upon us, by means of the Official Members, who are only supreme in numbers?

The people have had no opportunity to express their wish. Difficulties have been presented by an Hon. Member, arising from the space between British Columbia and Canada—difficulties arising from the means of transit, and from the means of communication being cut off—difficulties arising from what is at present called the rebellion in the North-West Provinces; that strife, as I am informed, gathering strength day by day. ["No, no," from Mr. DeCosmos.] Hon. Members say "No, no." I am so informed. I hope it is not so, but if it be, then under the name of Union we are called upon to take part in this internecine war.

I long for union as much as any man. In union of good there is strength and victory, but in union of evil there is defeat and disaster. I shall not occupy the time of this Council in adverting to matters which have been amply discussed; in expressing my conscientious opinion I do my duty. The Hon. Mr. Wood has told us that he counts professional honours as nought. I say nothing of prior claims to professional honours which I have lost, from, at all times, conscientiously supporting what I conceived to be right. His Excellency says that we are not fit for Responsible Government. I want to know on what local data he says so? Who has tried the people? On the scope of whose mind is it said they are not fit? Who has examined them?

The Hon. Member for Victoria District has properly said, if Hon. Members were paid for their attendance in the House, you would soon see whether men were capable or not to enter upon and fulfil the duties of Responsible Government. Then we should see whether the gentlemen disguised in mean apparel—Graduates of Oxford, Cambridge, and other Universities—who have cast their lot in this Colony, but are unable to defray their travelling expenses from remote places to the Capital. We should see, I say, whether they were capable, or not, of enlightening and controlling by their wisdom the feeble powers of Governmental diplomacy. Sir, by enlarged representation we shall discover such men. We had one foot forward in the direction of freedom, it has been forced back. The franchise has been taken away. Sir, I have very feebly endeavoured to touch upon these subjects. In fine, I affirm that the matter has not been, discussed fairly. There must be an enlarged representation, that the people may tell the Government what they want.

Hon. Members who have supported Confederation have failed in showing that this is the time for it. They are afraid to ask the people. They have refused to do so.

Much has been said; more will be said. I have listened, and have heard high-sounding words, and inflated tautology of this and that Hon. Member, which reminds me of soap-bubbles, which, though beautiful by the reflection of the sun's prismatic colours, are equally remarkable for their rotundity and their emptiness.

The Hon. Mr. BARNARD said:—Sir, in rising to support the motion of the Hon. and learned Attorney-General, I can but express my feelings of pleasure in being permitted to take a part in the great work in hand—that of hewing off the rough corners of the block which has come to us from the hands of the Executive, and which, after receiving the finishing touch at the hands of the people, will become the key-stone of the great Confederation arch which will, ere twelve months, extend from ocean to ocean. The terms as sent down by His Excellency are, I consider, a fair subject of congratulation. The manner in which they have been received by this House and the people is another subject of congratulation; and the paucity and utter idleness of the arguments used by the opposition, represented in this House as it is by the talent of the opposing party in the country, are also subjects of congratulation to His Excellency, this House, and the country. It is wrong, Mr. President, to charge the desire for Confederation on the part of its promoters to a desire for change. So far as my constituency and the adjoining ones on the Mainland are concerned, I may say safely that such was not the case—we accepted the Organic Act constituting this Council, and agreed to work it out to its legitimate end; and we have not countenanced nor have we been subjected to the many changes which other parts of this Colony have. I desire, before going further, to allude to a charge commonly made against my countrymen—often offensively put—but yesterday put by the Hon.