

Hon. COLLECTOR OF CUSTOMS—Sir, I rise to move,—

“That suitable provision be made by this House for the payment of the expenses of the Delegates to be sent from this Colony to Ottawa to negotiate the terms of the Confederation of this Colony with the Dominion of Canada.”

This has been one of the preliminary steps taken by the other Colonies before going into Confederation. If it has been necessary in other cases, it is certainly necessary for us. The expense is comparatively small, probably from \$2,500 to \$3,000, and the Governor has preferred to bring the matter before the Council now, instead of putting it into a supplementary estimate next session.

Hon. Mr. RING—Sir, I beg to inquire why these resolutions cannot be transmitted by post. I do not see why the Colony should be put to the expense of conveying the message; there is postal communication with Canada, and sufficient means of conveying to the Canadian Government what we have agreed upon. There can be no necessity to send Hon. Members to Ottawa. The fact of our doing so would lead to the presumption that Confederation is agreed upon. I differ from that. I say the people want to have the terms before them. Let us first see whether the Colony assents to Confederation in the abstract. Why should we send three or four Hon. and learned gentlemen—learned, no doubt. Why, I say, should we have the Colony put to so much expense when it is in a state of poverty and bankruptcy. [No, no.] I say, dispatch the terms in the ordinary way by post.

Hon. Mr. ROBSON—I hope, Sir, it will not be necessary to fight our battles over again. This House has, in the name of the Colony—[No, no, from Hons. Ring and Drake.] Perhaps it will suit some Hon. Members better to say a majority of this House. [No, no.] Perhaps certain Hon. Members will have the decency to be quiet until their turn comes to speak. A majority of this House—an overwhelming majority—has decided upon terms. We shall get the consent of the Canadian Government to these, or modified, conditions, and then submit them to the people. That is the only way. If we were, as proposed by the Hon. Member for Nanaimo, to ask the people whether they wanted Confederation, what would they say? [Mr. Ring—They would say “No!”] They would say most emphatically, “Yes, on terms.” They have said so for years. The Governor has adopted the usual course. These resolutions will go to the Canadian Government and come back, perhaps, modified, and the people will then be asked if they will have Confederation on these terms. The terms are now proposed to be sent to Ottawa. I cannot agree with the Hon. Member for Nanaimo that it would be cheaper to send them by post. The first outlay might be smaller, but it might cause delay, and, in my opinion, British Columbia cannot afford delay. The telegraph might do, but it would cost more. It ought to be by delegation. I think the House is entitled to know who are to go. I presume the Government will be prepared to give us the names. I, for one, would be unprepared to vote a sum of \$2,500, or more likely, \$5,000, if I thought the Governor would send Delegates who would not be acceptable to the people. I say that the people ought to be represented, and that particular Members who will fairly represent the people on the Responsible Government question ought to go. I say that if the Delegates are silent on Responsible Government the Cabinet at Ottawa will raise it. If the Delegates say that British Columbia is not prepared for it, that it has been voted down, the Cabinet will say, they have reason to believe that the people, or a large proportion of them, want it, and that they have had enough of discontent. I say, that although Responsible Government is not, strictly speaking, a condition, it underlies and permeates the whole question.

Hon. COLLECTOR OF CUSTOMS—Nothing would be easier than to forward the resolutions by post to Canada. This has probably been done already; but on every one of the resolutions, as you all know, there are numerous points requiring explanations, and to make these effective the presence at Ottawa of Delegates on our part, understanding the question and authorized to act for us, would appear to be indispensable. I am inclined to think that the names of the Delegates are pretty well known, but I have no authority to mention them here. The Governor has chosen them on his own responsibility, and he does not ask the Council to share that responsibility. For what purpose should the names be given? Does the Council wish to canvass the merits of each individual? What those gentlemen will say on the subject of Responsible Government I am not prepared to tell you; but I tell you this, that on that subject and on every other they will act with fairness and ability, with no discredit to themselves and with no discredit to us. I am ready at any rate to trust them so far as that. I hope this Council will trust them, as the Governor has shown himself ready to trust them. Every year there are expenses that