

Stuart Mill on Responsible Government: First, "Do the people require it; or are they unwilling to accept it?" We are told that this has not been made a question; I deny this statement. It has been made a question, more or less, in Victoria at every election. Every election depends more or less on this point. Second, "Are the people willing to take the burdens which are imposed on them by such a form?" I say that we have the answer to this proposition in the fact of there being people willing to come here where they are practically useless. Do not persons come forward to represent the people? A very large majority of the people take part in every election. Third, "Are the people willing and able to do that which will enable the Government to perform its functions properly?" This, I contend, is the condition of the Colony. The main argument of the Chief Commissioner in his very able speech, a broad argument and very well put, is that the population is scattered. I say this argument cannot be used with effect. We are told that the Government would fall into the hands of Victoria as the centre of population and wealth; no great harm if it did. Victoria is dependent upon all parts of the Colony, and they on her; their interests are identical. Another objection that has been raised is, that we cannot get men of proper intelligence and qualifications for positions of honour and trust. Looking round this Council Board we see men who have come out to this Colony to make their own fortunes and homes. Out of them the present members of the Government have been chosen, and out of our present population there can be found an equal number of men who can properly fulfil the duties of the Government. I cannot see that it is impossible to find proper men. If we find men willing to sit in this Council now, we shall find plenty ready and anxious to share in the burdens of Responsible Government. The sufficiency or insufficiency of population is not an element in this question. The United States has been pointed out to us as an example. I say there is no Responsible Government in the United States; it is an absolute despotic democracy, absolutely irresponsible to the people, except once in four years. There is no such thing as responsibility in the form of government of the United States. The only means of getting rid of a minister is by impeachment. The Hon. Member for Cariboo, in his rambling speech, gives us no new argument against Responsible Government. He certainly reiterated much that was forcibly put forward by the Hon. Chief Commissioner. I can well believe that the wheat was left at Cariboo, and the chaff came here.

Hon. Mr. HUMPHREYS—Sir, I have listened to the speeches of the Hon. Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works and to the Hon. Government nominee, and I find them difficult to answer, because there is so little in them. The only way would be to have them printed and read them. They carry their answers with them. One Hon. Member says that it rests on numbers. I say that intelligence is the only qualification for Responsible Government; numbers have nothing to do with it. If I err I am proud of erring with some of the greatest men that England ever produced. The Hon. Chief Commissioner has admitted that the population, taken man for man, is equal to that of any country. Then, I say, we have the proper qualification. Let us have practical, and not theoretical, means of governing. What is really the case? Under the present form of Government the people have to pay for the privilege and benefit of a few gentlemen sitting round this board. Take away this form of government and make it more liberal, and what is the danger? All the civil wars and troubles have not arisen from the uneducated, but from the ambition of the so-called educated classes. The people have been the conservatives who came forward to keep the country going. Take away the so-called intelligent and educated classes and it will be no great loss; the labouring classes can always supply men to fill their places. But take away the working classes and you kill the world; the educated classes cannot fill their places. In my opinion, Sir, the people want practical reality. They have endured too long the law's delay and the insolence of those in office. Why should we come here, year after year, to ask for a change in the form of government? I think that Responsible Government should be a *sine qua non* of Confederation. I shall move an amendment to that effect.

Hon. Dr. HELMCKEN—Great heavens! what terrible things are said and done in the name of the people. To hear Hon. Members talk one would think that they were the people. But the people are quiet while Hon. Members are very loud. I intend to support the Government. I do not mean to say much for or against. I take the position that the people can have Responsible Government when they want it; and their representatives ought to be satisfied to take it when the people really and seriously ask for it. Responsible Government has been one of the watchwords of a certain set of politicians who wanted to bring on Confederation.