

of the House intend to defeat Confederation. I may be called an extremist—an agitator; I admit I am. I desire to see the people having a share in the Government, instead of being under a despotism, or what is equivalent to it. I have been in this Colony nearly eleven years; I am satisfied that the people want Responsible Government. Hon. Members say there are different forms of Responsible Government; admitted. I am not sure that it would be advisable to introduce any one system in its entirety here. Hon. Members have been quoting writers upon this subject; I will quote Lord Macaulay, he says: "Government, like a good coat, is fit for the body for which it is made." I say if we cannot live on Responsible Government, we cannot live on irresponsible Government. I do not know what is shadowed forth in His Excellency's speech; I confess I cannot understand it. If the Governor had promised a two-thirds elective House, with heads of department sitting to give information without voting, then I think the question of Responsible Government would never have been considered. I ask Hon. Members to endeavour to approximate, and if they cannot agree to full Responsible Government, then to give us as liberal a form as they can. If you withhold Responsible Government you lose Confederation.

Hon. MR. ROBSON—Mr. Chairman, in rising to reply to what has fallen from Hon. gentlemen in opposition to Responsible Government, I crave the kind indulgence of this House; and should I, in the course of my remarks, appear unduly harsh or unkind, I beg Hon. gentlemen to attribute it to earnestness in advocating a great cause, rather than to a desire to wound the feelings of any. The Hon. Member for Cariboo, who is also a Member of the Executive, made a very convenient, yet, to my mind, singularly ineffective, reply to one point in my speech of Friday. I had, or fancied I had, with considerable force and elaborateness, pointed out the difficulties that might naturally be presumed to lie in the way of obtaining Responsible Government under the new constitution proposed to be conferred upon this Colony; and the only answer is that the Organic Act makes the necessary provision. I was as well aware of the provision made in that Act before the Hon. gentleman spoke as after; but no attempt has been made to meet the difficulties I suggested. The Hon. gentleman, with that facetiousness, poetry and ready wit for which he is so justly celebrated, proceeded to point out the undesirableness of Responsible Government in this Colony. Under it, he told us, Cabinets would be too versatile. In fact, he described the working of such institutions as a sort of dissolving views, a thimble-rigging operation, "now you see it, now you don't," in such quick succession would the changes be rung. The Chief Commissioner would, it appeared from his description, be much like Lincoln's celebrated flea. Now, Sir, where did the Hon. gentleman acquire his experience of the working of Responsible Government? Was it not in Canada? What do we find to be the experience of that country? Certainly it does not in any way warrant the conclusions arrived at by my Hon. friend. On the contrary, we find a change of Ministry to be of very rare occurrence. The present Premier of Canada has, with one unimportant intermission, been at the head of the Government for some twelve or fourteen years! As I stated on a former occasion, the people of British Columbia are not politicians, nor are they fond of change. They are naturally conservative. Give them a people's Government, and in no part of Her Majesty's Colonial Empire will a less versatile, a more conservative and loyal people be found. The Honourable gentleman said Responsible Government would blow the chaff into this House. Now, although I listened with pleasure, as I always do, to that gentleman's oratory and humour, I could not but experience a feeling of regret to find him on the wrong side of a great question, taking a false step. It is sad to witness the early mistakes of a young man of such talents, ambition, and promise; and when I hear such words coming from my Hon. friend, I begin to fear that the bright future, the brilliant political career I had marked out for him may never be realized. Sir, a certain proportion of chaff may be blown into this House, under Responsible Government, as is the case now; but, depend upon it, under the form of government we seek, the chaff would quickly be blown out at the back door, before the breath of public opinion. The people can always discriminate between wheat and chaff, and Responsible Government supplies the most effective winnowing-fan with which to separate the two. We were reminded by that Hon. gentleman that Responsible Government had its failures as well as its successes; and he referred to Victoria, Australia, and to Jamaica, as instances of failure. Now, I cannot but think the Hon. gentleman has been singularly unfortunate in going to these Colonies to prove his proposition. The former ranks amongst the most flourishing, progressive, and wealthy of all Her Majesty's Colonial possessions. Doubtless very grave political difficulties