

but I believe the Canadian statesmen are sufficiently far-seeing to take care that not an interest in this Colony shall suffer by the Resolutions which we are about passing. With regard to the Dominion Tariff, people thought that the abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty was the death-knell of the independence of Canada. I have lived, however, to see her more prosperous by that abrogation. It has taught her to develop her own resources, and to become self-reliant. After she was prevented from going to the United States, by that abrogation, she turned her attention to her own resources, and I believe she is now going to be one of the most progressive nations upon the earth. Undoubtedly, she is determined to progress westward, until she reaches British Columbia and the Pacific; and with all her progressive tendency she will not abate one jot of the loyalty for which, now as ever, she is distinguished.

Now, with regard to Responsible Government. ["Hear, hear," from Mr. DeCosmos.] I desire to touch lightly upon this subject in passing, because I have been told that my popularity has suffered by some remarks to which I gave utterance in this House upon a previous occasion. Much as I value popularity, I must on this question express my honest and conscientious opinion as an individual. I believe that I was the first to break ground on the question of Responsible Government, in connection with Confederation. I did it, not hastily or thoughtlessly, but on conviction; and I maintain that so long as I do it honestly, I am free to say what I please, as an individual, upon this matter. I do not believe, Sir, that, with our present population, with our people scattered over a vast extent of thinly populated country, and having regard to the various conflicting interests consequent on remoteness from the centre, the principle of Responsible Government cannot be satisfactorily applied to this community at present. I believe entirely in the ability and fitness of the Anglo-Saxon race to govern themselves; but I say that the time has not yet arrived under which that particular form of government, generally known as Responsible, can be satisfactorily worked in this Colony. I believe that the scheme foreshadowed by the Governor for Representative Government will be the best that, under present circumstances, the Colony can have. The popular members under that system will have a clear majority, and, consequently, the people will have the control of the purse-strings. I do not speak these words as a member of the Executive Council, but as the expression of my own deliberate opinion. Sir, I was not sent here pledged to any particular platform. My constituents had confidence in me, and were content that I should act on my own judgment. Speaking officially, I say that Responsible Government is not a question of Union. The Act of Union gives us the exclusive right to alter our own laws with respect to everything connected with the internal and local Government of the Province, so long as the Federal prerogative, if I may so call it, is not infringed. If the majority of the people want Responsible Government after Confederation, neither Governor Musgrave nor any other power on earth can prevent their having it. It is unfounded, unfair, and unjust, on the part of those who are opposed to the Government on the question of Confederation, to endeavour to put any other complexion upon the matter.

With respect, Mr. President, to the remarks about Cabinet Ministers and Executive Councillors, which have fallen from certain Hon. Members, I will only refer to the work that the Executive have laid before this House. From the general approbation which has been tendered, both in this House and on the outside, to the terms of Confederation which have been sent down by the Executive, I think that I am fairly entitled to assume that our labour has not been in vain, and that it has given satisfaction. I thank this Council for the words of encouragement and approbation with which they have accepted these conditions, especially those who have endorsed them. No one—not even the Hon. Member for Victoria City—can say that it is not the wish of the people that this question should be discussed, and ultimately dealt with by the people.

A charge has been preferred by the Hon. Member for Victoria District, against the Hon. Attorney-General and the Hon. Chief Commissioner, to the effect that they had turned their coats and changed since they had given votes upon Confederation in this House upon a former occasion. If they have changed, I maintain that upon conviction they are not to be blamed for doing so. It was well known that the Hon. gentleman had stated, or at all events I have always so understood it, had a telegram, or some other information from head-quarters, more than a year ago, to the effect that the Dominion Government were not prepared to negotiate terms of Confederation with this Colony, until after the settlement of the Red River question, which was then pending with the Hudson's Bay Company. The Hon. Attorney-General and the Hon. Chief Commissioner took this same ground last year. They were of opinion that nothing could be