

for New Westminster, for Victoria District, and for Lillooet, tell you that the people desire Responsible Government; that they must have it, and will have it. I say, Sir, that if they do say so, which I very much doubt, it is because the population have been educated up to it by those who have agitated the subject through the press and through speeches. Some no doubt press for it from conviction, and some with a view to serving their own ends; but I believe, Sir, that what the people really want is such an administration of the Government as will tend to bring back prosperity to the Colony. You are told that the present officials have no sympathy with the people; that they are not of the people; that they move in a different sphere, and constitute a class by themselves. Is this true—or is it not rather the fact that persons who have ends to serve have put us in a class by ourselves? The Hon. Member says that the hands of the benefactors of the people must be callous with labour. Who, I ask, are those throughout the world who have laboured most for the people by speech and pen? I say that the great statesmen who have done most to advance the truest interests of the people, have not sprung from the ranks of those whom the Hon. Member classes as the people. The Hon. Member for New Westminster says that the present Government Officials are well enough, able and honest, but that they cannot enjoy the confidence of the people because they are not *their* officials; they are not elected by them. And, be as able as we might, and as honest, and work as we might, and do what we might for the people's good, we could not gain their confidence because we are not directly responsible to them. And the Hon. Member sympathized with us for the position. Now, Sir, if it be true, as he says, that the Government have not the confidence of the community when, he says, they deserve it, whose is the fault? I say, Sir, it is the fault of those who, by voice and pen, have for years sedulously prejudiced the public mind of this community against that Government, not by pointing out faults to be remedied, but by general and indiscriminate fault finding, descending to personal abuse, and even to the verge of scurrility. We have striven to do our duty. Hon. Members do not advance arguments, but content themselves with saying that we are unpopular. I tell you why: If false impressions have gone abroad on this point let the responsibility of those impressions rest where it ought; for I say that it has been the business of certain persons to prejudice the public mind against Government officials. Let them settle the question of motives with their own consciences and with the people. If the officials in this House occupied the positions which would be held by officials under party government, I could understand the persistent course of the opposition offered by some members present; but when I see the changed position, that there is no Responsible Government, and that our mouths are closed and our pens cannot be used in self-defence, I feel that we have been struck in a cowardly manner, and let the public defend the motives of those who have attacked us. I invite all in this House, or out of it, to aid us to carry on the Government, and to act in a reasonable way in promoting the general interests of the Colony. Whether we are to have Responsible Government or not I don't know. I feel that it will come in good time, when the circumstances of the Colony are so changed as to admit of its adoption—I think sooner with Confederation than without it. But whether we have it or not, I ask Hon. Members to assist us instead of endeavouring to complicate matters and retard the progress of the Colony. I ask them to give us some credit for good intentions. Now, Sir, one remark in conclusion: the Hon. Member for New Westminster, in his powerful oration, has not only allured us with the prospects of popularity under Responsible Government, but he has, I will not say threatened, warned us of the result of our opposing him in this matter. He tells us that unless Responsible Government be conceded the cause of Confederation will be ruined; that the people would not have Confederation without Responsible Government. This in fact is embodied in the preamble of his Resolution. Sir, I have cordially supported Confederation because I honestly believe that it will be for the benefit of the local interests of this community as well as for the security and consolidation of Imperial interests; but I believe that this community is not ready for Responsible Government. I will not, therefore, do what I consider wrong that good may come; I will not vote for Responsible Government for the sake of gaining Confederation. I, for one, say, if the people won't have Confederation without Responsible Government; if they regard Responsible Government as the main object of Confederation; if they do not appreciate the real advantages of Confederation, let Confederation wait a while. The Governor has sent down Resolutions which he thinks can be carried out, and we hold that, whether under Confederation or not, this matter of Responsible Government will ultimately have to be settled by the vote of the people. When the proper