

formers who desire to bring about the improvement of our government system most naturally turn is that of Switzerland, where the elective system has now stood, with entire success, the test of nearly half a century's experience. Under the Constitution of 1848, revised and improved in 1874, the Federal Council, which, in the words of Sir Francis Adams, "is in the nature of an Executive Committee," is elected by the two Chambers—the National Council, of 145 members, elected by manhood suffrage and the Council of States, of 44 members, representing the cantons, elected, in most cases, by the legislative bodies, but in some by the people. The Federal Council—the Executive—consists of seven members, who are chosen for three years, being the same term as that for which the two Houses of the Legislature are elected. The President of the Executive and the Vice-President are chosen by the Legislature, and hold those positions for one year only, being succeeded by other members of the Executive. At page 58 of his interesting work

(b.) At the rate of 120 words per minute. Takes 10 minutes.

I refer, of course, to the honourable gentleman's speech, much of which was "tall" enough, in all conscience. But let me assure the honourable gentleman, as an old friend, that he is not designed to be a financial raven—he does not croak well. "The sad, presaging raven, that tolls the sick man's passport," is not the sort of bird he resembles, if I ventured to compare him with any bird it would be with something cheerier and chirpier. But he has departed from his old custom, and has tried tragedy. If he could adopt the manner of some honourable gentlemen on that side—for example the corrugated earnestness of the member for Wairarapa, the simulated ferocity of the member for Clutha, or the solemn melodrama of the gentleman to whom I have the honour to reply—I have no doubt that he would have done his work well. But the fact was that, as he went on and on, talking about these deficiency bills, this sinking revenue, this rising expenditure, this general galloping to bankruptcy, this "charnel-house of misery, reeking with woe," this "litany of sorrow," the honourable gentleman smiled and beamed, and his voice grew cheerier and brisker, and there was such an air of happy prosperity about him that, instead of reminding one of the prophet of evil, he reminded one of a very genial host when he offers one an especially good cigar. The fact is, my honourable friend cannot look the part. One cannot feel that he means it or thinks it. One feels, as he goes on prophesying this utter bankruptcy and smash of the colony, that he is the very last man in the world to believe his own prophecy. He reminded me of the celebrated Dr Cumming, who prophesied that the end of the world would take place in exactly eighteen months, and, having done that, to the horror and dismay of a large and credulous public, thereupon went and renewed the lease of his own house for a long term of years. That is the attitude of the honourable gentleman with regard to the approaching ruin of the colony. If he, Sir, will take advice from an old friend, he will go back to his old cheery style of picture—something, Sir, with a trunk railway in the foreground, and a bit of a boom in the middle distance. That is the sort of picture my honourable friend can paint, and which we all like to hear him paint, as when he sketches the Awarua Block, for example—that great country which only wants a trunk line of line of railway to make it "the garden of New Zealand." With regard to the cheap-money scheme, as I say, this House, no doubt, was returned—this party was returned—to oppose the old pernicious habit of borrowing money—borrowing millions for public works and squandering them for political purposes. We were returned not to go on borrowing millions for the purpose of building palatial public edifices and making political railways. But, Sir, I discriminate between borrowing in which you are secured as regards the principal and in which the interest is provided for you—I discriminate between that borrowing and the bad old borrowing which we were returned to put a stop to. Why does the taxpayer object to borrowing? Because, Sir, in the first place, there is the great loan principal which the country must some day meet, and, in the second place, there are the interest payments which have to be met from day to day by taxation. In raising money to lend to the farmers, call it borrowing if you like. I do not care what you call it, so long as you understand the thing itself—so long as you distinguish between that borrowing for which the State has to provide both the principal and the interest, and that borrowing which will not impose burdens on the taxpayers, but which will relieve the taxpayer, producer, and settler. Distinguish between that borrowing and the borrowing which will lead to an increase of the burdens upon the people of the country. Sir, what is wanted in New Zealand? Cheap money. What is it that is standing in the path of progress? It is that eternal burden of interest that is rolling up, piling up, lying upon the shoulders and weighing down our toilers, breaking their hearts, paralysing their energies. There never was a time when it was more burdensome to the industries and people than it is now. There never was a time when the energy and courage of the colonists were better shown than now. Why in the last few years they have faced the most extraordinary fall in the price of their produce, and in spite of that heart-breaking fall they have gone on toiling, working, increasing the output, until the volume of our exports has been greater than ever it was, although they have got so much less for it. And what has been weighing upon the heroic colonists of New Zealand? I say it is the iron law of interest. The honourable member for Selwyn, who objects so much to this scheme, has himself furnished the best apology for it by describing the relentless course of the appreciation of gold. What must we do to meet the appreciation of gold, which is making money dearer everywhere? We must take steps to make money cheaper. We cannot raise the price of our produce. No Government on earth could in New Zealand raise the price of New Zealand produce in the English market. What must we do? Lower the price of money to the New Zealand producer; and until we do that the New Zealand producer will be nothing but the bond-slave of the London money-lender. I say it is right that the credit of the State should be used to take