

Hon. MR. DECOSMOS—I have said indefinitely—possibly for ten or twelve years. We may have the Railway completed by that time. The Hon. Mr. Wood put the question properly. The tariff is a thing that is changeable—it rises and falls. Suppose that Canada has to raise six millions for a guarantee for the Railway, they might have to raise the tariff. I think the tariff will probably rise for a long time. But this is aside the issue. My object in making this proposition is to prevent clashing between our Local Government and the Dominion. I include produce in my recommendation,—which means stock, cereals, and vegetables. If a provision of that sort were added we would be in a position to get a certain degree of protection, and the largest interest, that is the agricultural interest, would be satisfied. But I maintain that beyond this we ought to protect certain rude manufactures; and in going into the Dominion we should go with as little friction as possible; there must be some friction, but we must keep things as smooth as possible. There will be, as I have said before, a revolution in labour and value. Now, we do not want too much protection. Let our agricultural interests be satisfied, and if those engaged in rude manufactures are protected the people will be satisfied. There are also a class engaged in trade who believe in protection; you will find them the agricultural interest, the manufacturing interest, and believers in protection, who will form a strong band of opponents to Confederation. Take away this subject of friction and you have the whole thing easier. If they are not considered there will be opposition before Confederation, and more after. If Hon. Members desire to keep up a feeling of loyalty towards Canada after Confederation, they will protect these interests. With respect to the Hon. Member for New Westminster, his argument is no stronger than his weakest point, which is—[Hon. Dr. Helmcken—His resolution]. Well, perhaps this is the weak point. He admits the whole point. I do not intend to follow the Hon. Member. I ask the Hon. Members to consider this question so as to consider industries and manufactures, so that the union may be lasting. I hope both sides will unite heartily in shaping our institutions with this end in view.

Hon. MR. RING—Mr. Chairman, I only desire to drop a few hints. I say that the Organic Act is wholly inapplicable to this Colony. Does the Hon. Member for New Westminster mean to hand us over under this Organic Act to swell the coffers of the Dominion? I hail any approach to free trade; I believe in it; free trade should have as free a course as the wind. Now, Sir, with regard to what has been said about protection to commerce; there are natural and artificial protections. I am for protecting the farmer by natural protections. Any attempt to shut out the surplus produce of another country must fail. The attempt to protect farmers by imposing a tax on flour and such articles, is a mistake. Any protection beyond harbour and pilot dues is a vicious system. Then, say others: free port is abolished, would you go back to direct taxation? I say, how can we ascertain what the people can pay by taxing income and property. The revenue would be smaller, but it is not fictitious. We must curtail expenditure, and having done so, I would abolish customs altogether as a source of revenue. I agree entirely with the proposition of the Hon. Member for New Westminster, that the tariff of the Dominion is a Federal matter.

Hon. MR. HUMPHREYS—Mr. Chairman, I rise to support the recommendation of the Hon. Member for Victoria District. I have listened carefully to the lofty arguments of the Government appointees on this question. It appears to me that the mistakes which the English generally make are attributable to their reading and studying great English writers too much, instead of considering what is practically applicable to a new country. Old countries are, in this respect, very different to new. Free trade may suit England and other old countries, whilst it may act very perniciously in a new one. Even in old countries a large proportion of the people whom free trade is calculated to benefit are against it. But in new countries protection is absolutely necessary. It is said by some Hon. gentlemen that the farming interests in the upper country needed no greater protection than nature had given them. I can mention an instance to the contrary. Flour was imported last year from California and sold in Cariboo at prices with which the upper country farmers could not compete. There ought to be some way of protecting the upper country farmers without clashing with the interests of the Dominion. I think it but just and right to protect the farmers above all other interests. I look upon this question as next to Responsible Government, and that I regard as the most important question in the Resolutions which are before the Council; all others sink into insignificance besides these two conditions.