

Protection will be a *sine qua non* with my constituents. If the Hon. senior Member for Victoria will divide the question into agricultural interests, manufacturing interests, and trade, I will withdraw my recommendation. I say that we want this question settled before Confederation. As for reciprocity, it has, in my opinion, to be based on existing industry. The most important treaty of reciprocity was between England and Portugal, under which English goods were admitted into Portugal and wines into England. Reciprocity to be successful must be based on existing industries. If we enter into a treaty of reciprocity with the United States, we must build up our industries, such as coal. I take it that what our coal has to contend with is foreign and native coal in the San Francisco and Portland markets. Unless there is an extended market for coal it is impossible to increase the trade in it. Reciprocity would destroy the most permanent interests; that, for instance, of agriculture, and we would gain nothing by it. I say if Canada thinks proper to negotiate a treaty of reciprocity with the United States, we should be at liberty to negotiate a separate treaty, or to insert special clauses in the treaty.

Hon. CHIEF COMMISSIONER—Let us clear the ground by getting the Chairman to put this resolution as an abstract proposition.

The Chairman then read the resolution as an abstract proposition for the vote of the Council:—

"That in the opinion of this Council it is necessary that the agricultural, horticultural, and dairy interests of British Columbia be protected."

Hon. CHIEF COMMISSIONER—Mr. Chairman, I am prepared to vote for that proposition, but I do not go quite to the extent of believing it necessary, although I think it very desirable. I don't think it of such importance as the Hon. Members for Victoria City and District, as to make it a vital question or a *sine qua non* of Confederation. I think it is desirable to continue protection under Confederation, and I do not see why we cannot. I think that the Dominion Government may, perhaps, be better able to provide the ways and means to effect that object than ourselves. We may not be able to provide a remedy, but we may advise. The protection that we ask for only partially affects the community. It is patent that it only affects Vancouver Island and the Lower Fraser at this time. ["No, no," from Mr. DeCosmos.] I say that the farmers of the Interior have a geographical protection. The time is so distant when agricultural produce can come into the upper parts of British Columbia, or when the produce of the Upper Country can come into competition with the produce of the Island and of the Lower Fraser in these markets, without feeling the cost of transport as equivalent to a protective duty, that before that time arrives the tariff may be amended again and again. With regard to what has been said about the closer union with a foreign country. I said, and I repeat it, that if the interests of the farmers would be prejudiced under Confederation, they would be utterly annihilated under Annexation. I believe that if we were brought under the Dominion tariff they would be injured. I did not say that the Dominion would not give us separate tariff regulations. I think they will do so, but I say we have put ourselves out of a position to prescribe. We have put before them a scheme, and we have left the tariff out of the scheme. We can now point out that we want protection, and leave it for the Dominion Government to point out the means. We have virtually put it out of our hands to dictate the means approved by this Council. I cannot agree in thinking that clause 91 leaves us free to impose our own tariff. I say we have made the British North America Act apply under the scheme which we have adopted under clause 16.

Hon. MR. RING—I differ from that.

Hon. CHIEF COMMISSIONER—That is the whole strength of my argument. We have virtually given up the power over the tariff to Canada, but it is open to us, and the Council are invited to state what is wanted. It must be remembered that those terms are only memoranda for Confederation. Different terms may be sent back, and it will be left for the new Council to decide upon them; and I, for one, am ready to suggest to the Canadian Government that we should have protection, although there are objections, for if you protect one interest another must suffer. We pay for the protection of produce in the increased price of the articles we consume. I go to the length of thinking it desirable to recommend the Canadian Government to protect our agricultural interests.

Hon. ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I will ask the honourable mover of this recommendation whether he insists on the word "necessary"?

Hon. DR. HELMCKEN—I say this is one of those things that under Confederation will be necessary.