

Hon. Dr. HELMCKEN—I say the tariff would be almost the same on these American goods then as now. I grant there will be a loss on agricultural produce. Hon. gentlemen say they may send agricultural produce. Butter, I believe, comes from cows; it costs money to buy a cow; there is the difference between raising agricultural produce and cattle. If butter could be grown from the ground I don't suppose that forty tons would have been imported. Farmers are poor; they have not money to buy stock. Keep up protection and they will have money by and by to purchase cattle. Experience of the agriculturalists in this Colony has taught me that farmers with capital come out at the wrong end of the stick, whilst those who have gone in to work for themselves have made money. I know most of the farmers on Vancouver Island, and I find that those who began with nothing are doing well. The Hon. Collector of Customs said that farmers in the upper country don't require a tariff. I went into that question yesterday. I think they will want it.

Hons. CARRALL and BARNARD—Prices are getting too high now.

Hon. Dr. HELMCKEN—It is exceeding easy and pleasant for us who want to eat to say prices are too high, but let any man go to work on a farm and he will have experience of the difficulties. The Hon. Collector of Customs says a treaty of reciprocity would be of great benefit, and that we might give up the farming interests of this Colony for it. Now, Sir, this Council said last year, almost unanimously, that agricultural interests must be protected. Why should Hon. Members think that we should require anything different under Confederation? The Hon. Member for Victoria District almost led me the way in saying that irritation would arise which would lead to a desire for annexation if the agricultural interests were not protected.

Hon. CHIEF COMMISSIONER—The interests we want to protect would be annihilated under Confederation.

Hon. Dr. HELMCKEN—I say what we want now is what we want under Confederation. Now, Sir, what have we been trying for? What has been our policy? Why, to protect industry. I am told that the Dominion Government will not admit any alteration in our tariff; and the example of the United States is cited. It has been said that California wanted to alter her tariff, and was not allowed to do so. I say, in reply, that California was one and a part of the United States. British Columbia is not yet Confederated, so we are still in a position to make terms. California would have made terms if she could, but could not; and it was for a time a question whether she should not secede. It was only large subsidies and steam communication that kept California in the Union. There is this peculiarity in the Organic Act, section 95 enables Canada to make different laws as to agriculture in each different Province.

Hon. CHIEF COMMISSIONER—I don't think that section applies to the tariff; it does not sound like it.

Hon. Dr. HELMCKEN—Perhaps it does not, but I say that anything advantageous to the Colony may be enacted by the Local Government. We can ask for a separate tariff, and Canada has power to make different laws as to agriculture in each Province.

Hon. ATTORNEY-GENERAL—No, that is a mistake. The 95th section weakens the Hon. Member's argument.

Hon. Dr. HELMCKEN—I say it strengthens my argument. It does not mean merely that people may clean thistles out of their land. The simple issue is: Shall agricultural interests be protected or not? It is quite possible that those who regulate the treaty, when brought into contact with Canadian statesmen, may devise some means whereby this result may be effected. I do not mean to give up to Canadian statesmen that they know more than ourselves about our local affairs; but I do think we may utilize their experience. I do not think that people, when they know that Confederation will not be forced upon them, will accept Confederation. The question for the farmers will be: Shall agriculture be protected or not? I ask again, is agriculture protected by the resolution or not?

Hon. ATTORNEY-GENERAL—It is not a *sine qua non*.

Hon. CHIEF COMMISSIONER—I think the idea to take a vote on protection to agriculture a good one, and I would rather that the resolution stopped there. Then I would propose a further resolution, pointing out the difficulties and ills we labour under.

Hon. Dr. HELMCKEN—I accept that alteration. We shall by it procure an expression of the opinion of the Council upon this point.

Hon. Mr. DECOSMOS—I go further than that resolution. I stand here as a protectionist, and I want to see the manufacturing interests protected as well as the agricultural interests.