

Hon. Member for Victoria District (Mr. DeCosmos) seems to argue that we inserted it in order to secure the advantages which would accrue to special localities from way traffic. But I can assure the House that the Executive Council entertained no such idea in adjusting the details of this great scheme; they have endeavoured to secure the utmost advantages to the whole Colony. You will observe, Sir, that the clause is most general in its terms, and it was purposely made so. It does not attempt to define the line the road should take; it may have a terminus, as I distinctly stated before, at any place on the coast most convenient—at Bentinck Arm, Bute Inlet, or Burrard Inlet, or even by crossing the fiords between Vancouver Island and the Mainland, it may come to Victoria or Esquimalt. These details must be left to the parties constructing the line. The Executive Council have avoided all through all sectional and local considerations. I stated yesterday, and I repeat it again, that I hoped the Railway would follow down the valley of the Fraser River to the seaboard; but the Government have purposely avoided any definition of any particular line, and have made it as general as possible. I also said that I did not think that the Dominion Government would make the line; and I said so because I am well aware that this is not the way in which great works of this character are generally undertaken in these times. I believe that a private company, with the assistance of the Dominion Government, and I hope the Imperial Government also, will construct the line. But this is merely surmise. I know no more of my own actual knowledge than other Members round this board. But I come to this conclusion because I know that it is not considered feasible for Governments to undertake such works. It has been found to be a great mistake. Then why discuss the suggestions of the Hon. Member for constructing a Railway from Yale to Kamloops, or try to fix details which the spirit of the whole Resolution avoids, when we don't even say the line shall pass Yale or Kamloops at all? It is a vast undertaking, and if undertaken at all, it will not be with a view to profit, but with a view to the future, and as part of the great responsibility of the Canadian Government in contracting alliance with this country. The strenuous desire of the Canadian Government is to make such a line. I think they are able to do it, and we know for certain that they will do it if they can. I do not agree with the Hon. Member for Victoria City (Dr. Helmcken), that Confederation means a Railway; the Government do not say that there shall be no Confederation without a Railway.

Hon. DR. HELMCKEN—No; that is my opinion, and I do not put it forward as the opinion of the Government.

Hon. CHIEF COMMISSIONER—I am glad to have that set right. The Government believe that the Railway will be made, but they do not make it a *sine qua non*; but if, on a calm view of the whole subject in negotiating with Canada, it is found impracticable for Canada to commence to make the Railway at once, then I see alternative terms, which will not only suit Canada but the people of this Colony, who, you must remember, will have to pass upon them when they come back from Canada. It has been stated the public mind is impressed with the idea that the insertion of so paltry a sum as \$1,000,000 will lead to the postponement of the completion of the Railway for fifty years. I can assure them it is a fallacy. Why, Sir, as well put by the Hon. Member for New Westminster yesterday, common sense shows that it would be against the interest of the parties making the line to prolong the work over a number of years. It can only be carried on quickly to secure any real profit. I again repeat what the Government Members stated yesterday so distinctly, that the one million a year is not nearly the sum which will have to be spent; the amount stated is only intended to serve as a guarantee or an earnest that the work will be done. If we had said make it in so many years time, they could not have acceded to it. Certainly in three years' time the Dominion Government will be in a position to determine the line. The suggestion of the Hon. Member is, in my opinion, wholly inapplicable to this scheme. If admitted it would entirely remodel the Government clause, which is general. The suggestion is, that the first section should be made at some place on Fraser River. As I said before, we cannot tell whether the Railway will come down the valley of the Fraser River at all. Those who spend the money have a right to choose their line. As far as my own opinion goes, I should say that the Canadian Government will determine the basis of the scheme on engineering considerations of the port best suited for pouring in supplies, and for the cheapest construction of the road. Do not let us hamper so great a scheme by such minute details; let us leave it for those who have to construct the line to select their own route.

Hon. MR. ROBSON—The Hon. the Chief Commissioner has left very little for me to say upon this clause, but there is one point to which I would direct attention. The Hon. Member