

goods; he thought this the proper time to bring these matters to the attention of the Dominion Government, believing that they would listen to them. Some discussion ensued as to the mode in which the different recommendations and resolutions were to be taken up.

The Hon. ATTORNEY-GENERAL called Hon. Members' attention to the fact, that it had been agreed by the House that an expression of opinion on these general principles, namely, as to the protection of agriculture, of manufactures, and of commerce, should be taken, and that, as had been very properly suggested by the Member for Victoria District, a general resolution should be framed on these abstract views.

Hon. Mr. ROBSON—I shall offer an amendment, because I think the question of free port and protection should not be dealt with together.

Hon. ATTORNEY-GENERAL—The proposition of the Hon. Member for Victoria District is as to what shall be admitted free; the Hon. Member for New Westminster proposes to suspend the whole tariff.

Hon. Mr. ROBSON—I stated one reason why I thought it not desirable to put the two together. You cannot get the control of the tariff. I say we want free trade in certain articles, and I say we must have the tariff entirely re-modelled as to these articles. My difficulty is that we were last evening discussing protection, and how far we should have the power to deal with it. I moved an amendment which was, I think, the only constitutional way of dealing with the question, and in answering certain propositions of Hon. gentlemen yesterday, I endeavoured to deal with protection, *per se*. I listened with interest to what fell from the Hon. Commissioner of Customs, and I do not like to set my opinion against his on matters of this kind, on which I know he is an authority, especially when I find him backed by the Hon. Attorney-General and Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works. I instanced the United States of America, and said that they are a living instance of non-separation of tariff. The Hon. Commissioner of Customs did not go so far as to say we could frame a tariff for ourselves, but that the Dominion Government would frame it for us. Now, Sir, I say that we must not run away with any such idea. If we were allowed to have a different scheme of revenue, Newfoundland would ask the same; New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and other Provinces would all ask for exceptional tariffs, and the Federal fiscal policy would be broken up and destroyed. Depend upon it we ought not to run away with such an idea. The Dominion Government cannot admit of exceptional or differential tariffs any more than the United States can do so. Some Hon. Members say that we are not under the Organic Act, and need not be under it, unless we choose; that there is a distinction between the relations of the Provinces that were Confederated under the Act and those that may hereafter come in, and that we can change the Organic Act if we think proper. I admit that any Province not prepared to come in under the Organic Act can stay out. The Act is not binding on us now, but it will be if we go into the Dominion. I am surprised to hear some Hon. Members speaking lightly of a reciprocity treaty. Look at the single item of coal. We at present only send 18,000 tons per annum to San Francisco. I have no doubt that under a reciprocity treaty, we should supply them with 50,000 tons a year at least, to say nothing of anthracite coal. In the course of a few years, allowing time for trade to develop itself, this would bring in \$900,000 or, say, one million dollars a year into the Colony. Mr. Chairman, we are now speaking of a single item, and that, I believe, not the largest, which would bring in one million a year, and that calculation is based upon the present consumption of coal in San Francisco, and the consumption will no doubt increase. In addition to this, look at the quantity of shipping, and the cheap commodities which these ships bring in, which could hardly be brought as a measure of commerce. There are objectors to reciprocity. No doubt it would be very nice if we could open the United States ports to our goods, and close our ports to their goods. But this would not be reciprocity. There is, in my opinion, only one answer to be given. I say, give the farmers good roads, and this will be protection for them. Now, Sir, what does the development of our coal interests mean? It means extension of labour, and circulation of money. Farmers have at once a full demand for their produce. Apply the same argument to lumber. Its development would cause more money to be expended in the Colony. Every ton of coal brought to the bank, and every tree cut down, means spending of money. There, then, is another field opened up for what farmers have to sell. Give the farmers this development and good roads, and they would soon find out that reciprocity would be like the handle of a jug, on the side of British Columbia. Depend upon it we will come in under the reciprocity treaty, and the advantages will be so great on our side that it will hardly be reciprocity. Nothing can be more unfair than to suppose we are to have a free market in the United States and they have none here.