

Hon. CHIEF COMMISSIONER—Will the Hon. Member alter the word "necessary" to "very desirable"?

Hon. ATTORNEY-GENERAL—If you retain that word I must vote against it.

Hon. DR. HELMCKEN—I retain the word.

Hon. MR. ROBSON—"Highly desirable" would suit my views better.

Hon. MR. DECOSMOS—I think the word ought to be retained.

Hon. MR. ALSTON—I believe all restrictions are false in principle, and Governments have no right to travel out of their path to dictate principles. It has rightly been said that protection to agriculture is at the expense of other things, and it is simply ridiculous to say that agricultural interests are the only interests in the Colony. Vancouver Island cannot be looked upon as an agricultural country. I would vote for protection temporarily, but as soon as good roads are made the farmer needs no protection; and, although free trade may be injurious to one interest, I believe it to be the correct principle. It strikes me that the Organic Act is a treaty of partnership between four countries, and where the terms are silent we can alter the Organic Act. If it be that we may make the laws, Canada still takes the revenue; and unless the resolution is altered I cannot vote for it.

Hon. CHIEF COMMISSIONER—I may clear the ground if I make a suggestion. I think it would be better to take the subjects separately, and then I would embody the whole matter in one Resolution to His Excellency.

Hon. MR. WOOD—It would be desirable to have as unanimous a vote as possible. The Hon. Chief Commissioner and the Hon. Mr. Alston have said that a tax on produce would be likely to prove injurious. I say that protection is only to be extended until our agriculturalists can compete with the farmers on the opposite shore. If reciprocity eventually arise, I do not pledge myself to support protection. It may be necessary then to make some compensation to farmers, but I cannot say I would support it.

Hon. MR. DECOSMOS—We want a positive guarantee for protection.

Hon. CHIEF COMMISSIONER moved an amendment to change the word "necessary" to "highly desirable."

The recommendation, as amended, was carried.

Hon. MR. DECOSMOS moved a Resolution, "That it is highly desirable that manufactured articles should be protected."

Hon. CHIEF COMMISSIONER—I would ask the Hon. Member to define "manufactured articles."

Hon. MR. DECOSMOS—I would name boots and shoes. Now, in event of any reciprocity treaty, I should like to see our interests protected. A reciprocity treaty may exert a stimulating influence for a time, or it may be detrimental. We have confectionery and many other things; for instance, there is a proposition to erect a woollen manufactory. Furniture, at present, all comes from the United States. Our cabinet-makers could manufacture it here if they could import the raw material free. The same could be said of wheelwrights. If we are to have large public works we must have these interests protected. Harness may be brought in cheap under reciprocity; leather and soap likewise. I start out on this principle: if we can keep our manufactures at home we are doing our duty.

Hon. MR. BARNARD—The Canadian tariff applies to all the articles mentioned by the Hon. gentleman. I am mystified in regard to this protection. He says he wants protection for leather, and boots, and harness. Twenty per cent. is our tariff on waggons, and yet no class of waggons, such as is wanted, can be made here.

Hon. MR. DECOSMOS—We shall never have producing manufacturers if we do not protect them. With regard to waggon building: parties now engaged in the business were about to leave until the tariff was introduced. Competition lowers the price of home-manufactured articles.

Hon. DR. HELMCKEN—I shall support this Resolution; the Canadian tariff to some measure meets it.

Hon. ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I shall ask to have the words altered.

Hon. DR. HELMCKEN—Presently we shall have to protect British Columbian interests against Canadian interests. If the farmer and boot-maker are protected, other local manufactures must be protected also. Where you do not produce things admit them free. It is our duty to protect our own interests.