

Resolutions respecting the proposed subsidies to be granted by Canada, I may possibly be wasting my breath, and the time of the House; but although that may be the case, my duty to my constituents and the country demands that I should do so. With respect to Confederation, I have ever looked at it from one point: it must have a money value. ["Hear, hear," from Dr. Helmcken.] A great deal has been said about the form of Government—about Responsible Government—but I say this: that every Government, whether responsible or irresponsible—must have money. It is impossible for the most perfect political system to move without it. Ways and Means must be provided. Now, I have always said, and I still maintain, in view of Confederation, that the amount that ought to be placed at the disposal of our Local Government when we enter Union ought to be an annual surplus of \$200,000, or nearly so, after having provided for the annual current expenditure of our Local Government; that is, for all the offices and services that must be kept up at the expense of the Colony, in order to keep it moving as a Province of the Dominion. We know by reference to the Estimates what they are; but in addition, there must be a certain sum provided for keeping in repair public works, such as the Main Trunk Road from Yale to Cariboo, and our public buildings. After these expenses have been defrayed, I should expect a surplus to the credit of the Local Government of about \$200,000.

Hon. Mr. TRUTCH—As against \$152,000 in the estimate accompanying the Resolutions?

Hon. Mr. DECOSMOS—Yes; some surplus of that kind would be about the proper amount, if we expect the Colony to be any better off after Union than before, and if we expect our Local Government to do anything towards developing the resources of the country. Now, Sir, how shall we get that surplus? By the proposition before us, for which the Hon. Member for Victoria City (Dr. Helmcken) gets the credit as the originator? No, Sir. But I will not anticipate the answer to these questions. Let us first examine the Government financial scheme, of which the Hon. Member for Victoria is the financier. The first proposition made by the Government is that we shall assume for financial purposes that our population is 120,000. Now, Sir, I am one of that number who do not believe in assumptions in matters of finance,—one of those who deem it to be dangerous to found financial measures on fiction instead of fact; for in no department of Government ought there to be maintained a stricter regard for truth and fact than in the department of finance. The financier who resorts to fiction, no matter how well-intentioned, nor how patriotic, may justly be doubted. It may be as the Hon. Chief Commissioner has said: that the assumption of a population of 120,000 may be illogical and untrue, yet the result may be equitable. But, Sir, I do not think that we ought to assume, neither do I see the necessity for assuming, that we have a population of 120,000 instead of 40,000, as I believe it to be, as it is recognized to be, and as it is in fact. The magnitude of the subject, the historical aspect of the terms, the dignity of the contracting parties, the nobleness of the work of nation-making, our own self-respect, ought to lift us above the atmosphere of assumption and fiction, ought to guide us by an accurate and genuine political standard, and ought to inspire us with such pure and lofty political sentiments as would stamp the financial terms with the indelible marks of truth, fact, and statesmanship, and for ever shut out the possibility of posterity associating our public men with mere parish politicians, instead of ranking them with enlightened and able statesmen. At the utmost, our population does not exceed 40,000, including men, women, and children,—Whites, Chinese, and Indians,—10,000 civilized, and 30,000 semi-civilized. It would be a mistake to estimate an Indian to be equal to a white man as a consumer; but when we consider that in our white population the males are largely in excess of the females, and that in this country they are very large consumers, it would not be incorrect to conclude that there is no unfairness in making our whole population—Whites and Indians—as equal to 40,000 consumers in the Dominion. Starting, therefore, with a population of 40,000, we base our calculations on facts, and not on fiction, as in the governmental assumption of a population of 120,000. I will now, Mr. Chairman, proceed to deal with the financial proposition of the Hon. gentleman for Victoria City—which is the Government scheme—by which he proposes to get \$152,000 surplus revenue for the Colony after the Union. The proposed sources of revenue to produce this surplus are four in number, viz.: (1) an annual subsidy of 80 cents per head of our population, which is assumed to be 120,000, and on that basis of population would yield \$96,000; (2) a fixed subsidy of \$35,000 per annum; (3) interest at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum on the difference between the actual amount of the debt of the Colony at the date of Union, and the proportion of the public