taxation. So far from sweeping off population we secure it, and in England free trade is intended to benefit the manufactures and it does so. It struck a blow at agriculture, and if they had not gone in to rearing and spending more money it would have been an utter failure. High price for corn is now unknown; but free trade by way of dogma is absurd.

Hon Mr DeCosmos—There is a distinction between a tariff for protection and a prohibitory tariff. The hon Collector of Customs will set me right if I am mistaken, but I believe the importation of arms from foreign countries into a colony is prohibited.

Hon Collector of Customs—Prohibited, I believe, altogether.

Hon Mr DeCosmos—Precisely so; that the defence of the Colony may never depend on foreign aid. The hon Chief Commissioner asked the extent of the protection. I say during the infancy of the Colony. When we are able to run alone protection will be unnecessary. With regard to farmers wanting free trade, I deny it emphatically.

Hon Dr Helmcken—No doubt the Canadian Government will like this amendment of the tariff.

Hon Attorney General—I shall vote against it because it says it is expedient to arrange it in the terms. If the hon member alters the wording it would then become on the same footing as the last recommendation.

Hon Mr DeCosmos altered the wording accordingly, and on vote the motion was lost.

The motion of hon Dr Helmcken was put and carried.

Thursday, 24th. March.

On the House going into Committee of the whole on the Confederation Resolution.

Mr. DeCosmos moved the following resolution "That in the opinion of this Council it is expedient in order to foster commerce, to admit, duty free, into this colony or some portions thereof certain articles of foreign merchandise not produced in the Dominion or this colony, and that provision for the admission of the same be made in the terms of union with Canada. In reply to a question the Hon mover said it would be impossible to name all the articles; but a few of them might be instanced, such as tropical fruits, silks and English dry 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 resolution 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 remodelled 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 endeavored 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 Chief 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 Edwards 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 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 stop out. The act is not binding on us now, but 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 labor, and circulation of money. Farmers have at once a full demand for their produce. Apply the same argument to lumber. Its developement 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.

Hon Collector of Customs asked if Mr Robson had any resolution to propose.

Hon Mr Robson said that at present he was replying to remarks that had been made by other hon gentlemen.

Hon Attorney General said that the course that the hon gentlemen was pursuing was embarrassing, and would tend to complicate the question before the House, and proceeded to correct a statement which he understood Mr Robson to have made as to what had fallen from the hon Chief Commissioner, hon Mr Hamley, and himself on a previous occasion as to the right to control tariff being in the Provinces after Union.

Hon Mr DeCosmos—Anyone who knows the history of the United States knows that if any question of dealing with the tariff law in any manner other than federal could arise, it would be in reference to groups of states instead of single states. I say then that we must consider this as a group of Provinces of the Dominion. Many years will probably not elapse before we see groups of States distinguished as Pacific and Atlantic, or East and West and North and South, in the neighboring Republic.

Hon Mr Robson—I rise to move a resolution. It is the same as that proposed at the Yale Convention by the hon member for Victoria District in 1867.

Hons Dr Helmcken and Attorney General.—What Convention? We know of no Convention.

Hon Mr Robson—I have a perfect right to allude to what took place at the little Parliament at Yale. I believe this to be the proper way to approach the subject. The resolution which I propose is as follows:

"That a respectful address be presented to His Excellency the Governor recommending that the following may be inserted in the conditions of the proposed terms of union with Canada: That at any time after the union the Legislature of British Columbia shall pass an address to the Governor-General of Canada declaring that it is expedient to establish a free port on the Pacific in order to advance the interests of British commerce in the North Pacific, the Parliament of the Dominion to make provision for the establishment of the same."

It is astonishing to find what a change has come over the hon Mr DeCosmos since he changed his city seat for a rural seat. He is becoming less capable of taking a statesmanlike view of these things than he was two years ago. I think by providing that, the new council shall, after due deliberation find it desirable, that a Free Port shall be established in this colony is, after all, the proper way. I cannot think that this House, with the small representative element that it has should be asked to decide this point. I say that the tendency of the Canadian policy is in the direction of free trade. (No, no, from hon Mr DeCosmos.) I say it is, and there is a speech of Sir G E Cartier recently published, in which he says that the tendency of Canadian policy is towards free trade. Now I believe that a great British Empire is to be established on this continent,—the Greater Britain; and I believe that all British manufactures will be admitted free. If Great Britain takes her true part in pushing forward this Empire, she will naturally expect some advantages; she will naturally look for some immediate financial result. Every unproductive laborer in England is a tax upon the others; but transfer them to the Dominion and they will become producers and consumers. I believe it to be of the first importance that there should be a free port here. By a free port I do not mean that everything should necessarily be admitted free. There is no reason why local industries and especially agricultural interests should not continue to enjoy substantial protection. I believe the Canadian Government will readily realise the advantages of the policy of having a free port on the Pacific. There could be no local jealousies growing out of it. The provinces on the Atlantic could not object. Our free port would attract commerce and wealth to the nation which they could not possibly attract, and thus enrich the nation and reflexly benefit all. I maintain that while the larger advantages would be local, the general advantages would