

explanation for the country. It is all very well to say we will determine what the treaty is when it comes before the house; that is perfectly right; but the question is: Are we in favour of any kind of treaty? Hon. members in that particular corner of the house have refused to answer that question.

Now, let me turn to the treaty itself. It was opposed in the house by the United Farmers of Alberta members, and it was also opposed at their convention on the ground that it was discriminatory. That is the term used again and again; it was discriminatory. And discrimination is pointed out in two respects: it is discriminatory because it admits Australian agricultural products into Canada free in competition with Canadian agricultural products. Now, I admit that objection was not urged by hon. members in that corner of the house at the time the treaty was under consideration. It was urged, of course, by hon. gentlemen immediately opposite, as they urged it to-day. From their point of view they have been perfectly consistent in the matter; we must say that for them. But I maintain that hon. gentlemen in that particular corner of the house have not been perfectly consistent. They are opposing the treaty to-day because it is discriminatory. They say: "Oh, well, now, we don't oppose it because of its discrimination in that particular direction." But the hon. member for Acadia speaking to-day referred to its effect and he said: "We have got new light upon the subject." Well, is that "new light" the fact that agricultural products from Australia are competing with Canadian agricultural products? The fact of the matter is that hon. members in that corner of the house have, consciously or unconsciously, advocated the principle of duties on agricultural products. I do not see any difference, Mr. Speaker, in principle between demanding protection on agricultural products and objecting to the removal of what protection there is. The two things are the same in principle. I know, of course, it might be contended that at a certain particular point the duty was just right; but who is going to say what is the particular point at which the duty is just right? There is no difference between advocating protection and objecting to protection being removed.

Again, a very interesting point has been brought out. This treaty, it is said, is discriminatory because it has removed certain duties from Australian agricultural products. And yet the hon. member for Rosetown particularly referred to the fact that those duties were no good to us anyway. I cannot understand the force of the argument that would object—

[Mr. Brown.]

Mr. IRVINE: That is evident.

Mr. BROWN: I beg pardon?

Mr. IRVINE: That is evident.

Mr. BROWN: I cannot understand the force of the argument that would object to the treaty because duties were being removed, and then contend, on the other hand, that these duties were no good to us. Nor can I understand the force of the argument that would object to our manufacturing industries receiving concessions in Australia on the ground that their interests were being served by increasing the disadvantages of the farmers of Canada. If the duty is no good to us, as the hon. member for Rosetown so persistently asserted, and I think it has also been admitted by the United Farmers of Alberta—

An hon. MEMBER: No.

Mr. BROWN: If that duty is of little value, as they claim—and I am inclined to agree with them—why contend it is discriminatory, that the interests of our farmers have been sacrificed? For my part, Mr. Speaker, I am quite willing that Canadian manufacturing interests should find all possible markets for their goods, particularly if our interests are not being sacrificed in doing that for them. How can it be contended that if these duties on our products were no good, in giving them up we are making any sacrifice?

Mr. EVANS: Does the hon. gentleman maintain that the duty on butter previous to the Australian treaty was any benefit to our farmers?

Mr. BROWN: No, most certainly I do not, I never have; but I am not so inconsistent as to take the position that the giving up of that duty is a sacrifice for the benefit of the Canadian manufacturer. I think I am quite right when I say that the hon. member for Rosetown was somewhat lacking in his ability to grasp a clear, logical argument. Hon. members immediately opposite are quite consistent in the matter, but as the hon. member for Vancouver Centre (Mr. Stevens) pointed out, the hon. member for Rosetown is absolutely inconsistent.

I have no particular interest in the financial welfare of the leader of the opposition (Mr. Bennett) for instance, but I do not say that I would have any particular objection to giving away a lead dime if someone would give him a silver dollar. I am giving up something which is of no use to me in order that he may reap the benefit, and that is exactly the position in regard to the Australian treaty, so far as the question of agricultural products