

tioned, but on any articles of her tariff in which she gives better terms to any other country. That was not the intention of the Government, as will be seen by a telegram which was sent to our commissioner in January, in which it was expressly stated that we agreed to the "most-favoured-nation" treatment, so far only as articles named in the treaty are concerned. Our commissioner, either through error or for reasons which he explains in his correspondence, signed the treaty with the clause in it as I have read, giving "most-favoured-nation" treatment to France in all articles of our tariff.

Now, that is the gentleman who objects to the present tariff because it might possibly give most-favoured-nation treatment to Belgium and to Germany. I should say that the speech from which I have quoted was delivered in the session of 1893, at a time when the Minister of Finance refused to ask the House to endorse the treaty which his subordinate, at that time, and his present chief, had seen fit to make with France. But at a later date the Minister of Finance saw fit to adopt that treaty, and asked the House to agree to it, and the House did agree to it. Under that treaty which is now in force with France, we are committed to a vast deal more than this present tariff commits us to, even if the present contention of the leader of the Opposition is correct, that we would be forced to admit Belgium and German goods. That is the bug-a-boo which is now held up, that this tariff will allow German and Belgian goods to come in at reduced rates. What are we committed to by the present treaty with France made by this hon. gentleman who raises that objection at the present time? On May 29th, 1895, Mr. Edgar asked :

What foreign powers have become entitled, under treaties with Great Britain, to like commercial privileges with Canada as those granted to France by the treaty of 6th February, 1893, known as the French Treaty? 2. Do each and all of such foreign powers become entitled to all the reductions proposed by Article 1 of said treaty?

Mr. IVES. 1. From the best information at the moment attainable, it appears probable that the following foreign powers will, under treaties with Great Britain, become entitled to like privileges in Canada as those granted to France by the treaty of February 6th, 1893, on its ratification, &c., viz.:—Argentine, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Bolivia, Chili, Columbia, Costa Rica, Germany (Zollverein), Muscat, Russia, Salvador, Sweden and Norway, and Uruguay. * * * It is also possible that the treaties with the following countries might be held to be binding on Canada in like manner:—Egypt, Montenegro, Mexico, Persia, South African Republic, Venezuela, and Zanzibar.

Now, here is a gentleman who negotiated a treaty with France under which we are compelled, without any reciprocal consideration from those powers, to give most-favoured-nation treatment to twenty other nations besides France. This gentleman objects to the present tariff proposal because it might possibly include Belgium and Germany alone. The inconsistency of his position is such as would be only possible on

the part of the hon. gentleman himself, such as we have learned to expect from him, and therefore hardly worth special notice.

But I will say for those of us who lean towards a lower rate of tariff, that the possibility of other nations as well as England at some future time coming under this reciprocal schedule, is one of the things we like best, in this tariff proposal. This is an offer of reciprocity to the world. If Britain is at present, and likely to remain for some time, the only country who is to get the advantage of it, it is due to her own good sense in making the tariff arrangements she has made. But we hope to educate the world gradually to understand the value of Canadian trade and to induce other nations to come in under the same terms.

Now, Sir, this reciprocal scheme is objected to still further by the leader of the Opposition on the ground that it leaves too much power in the hands of the Controller of Customs. I cannot agree with him there. I do not see where else the power is to be left than in the hands of that particular Minister, charged with the administration of customs, subject, as he always must be, to the control of the whole Cabinet. I think that is one of the special advantages of the scheme, that, without any further legislation on our part, without negotiating a treaty, without going to any expense or cost, or giving any new or extraordinary advantages to a foreign country, we can simply admit from time to time other countries to this reciprocal arrangement whenever they have been wise enough to reduce their tariff towards us to a reasonable figure.

Then the clause which is meant to smash combines is objected to, because that leaves too much power in the hands of the Governor General in Council. Why, Sir, I consider that is what the country will consider about the best clause in the whole proposal. Such an able man as my hon. friend from West York (Mr. Wallace), the late Controller of Customs, tried his hand at smashing combines some years ago by legislation. It was not very successful. The people of the United States have tried to smash them by legislation, but it has not been successful. You can drive a coach and four through any Act of Parliament; but here the whole matter is left in the hands of the Governor in Council, that is, the Government of the day, who will be responsible to Parliament for any action that they may take, and responsible to the public at the same time, and who are bound to act in such a way as may defy criticism in dealing with a case of this kind. All that is required in order to destroy existing combines or to prevent new ones from coming up is, that the Government of the day should be satisfied, from evidence which they have obtained, that there is a combine and that it can be broken up by a reduction of the tariff or, if necessary, by placing the