

*Australian Treaty—Mr. Cooté*

I want to assure the government and the house that in my constituency there is more antagonism to the Australian treaty than there is to the extension of that treaty to New Zealand. I am anxious to vote for the abrogation of the treaty with Australia, because in that way we will get rid of both the Australian treaty and its extension to New Zealand. Cutting off the extension of the benefits of this treaty to New Zealand would simply be equivalent to cutting off one limb of the tree; I am anxious to see the tree itself cut down. If Australia were to abandon what is generally known as the Paterson scheme, instituted for the promotion of the export trade in butter, we would be faced with importations of just as much butter from Australia as we are now receiving from New Zealand. I am unable to understand the attitude of the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Neill).

Those who are raising beef and mutton are facing the same conditions that are being experienced by the producers of butter, and just here I should like to quote briefly from a letter which was sent to the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) by the Western Live Stock Growers' Association. It is dated November 18, 1929, and says:

Australia has not been exporting beef into Canada until this year. We find there was none last year, against 1,616,000 pounds for the first nine months of this year, and the mutton and lamb exports to Canada have increased from 1,119,000 pounds last year to 3,359,000 pounds for the first nine months of this year, which, at the present rate, will amount to nearly four times as much lamb and mutton as the preceding year. New Zealand shipped us last year 1,756,000 pounds of beef as against 2,000,000 pounds for the first nine months of this year, also a big increase. These two countries have such an enormous advantage over us in the cost of raising cattle and sheep that we can easily understand that the ability to capture the Canadian market might only be measured by the time it takes to raise more stock on their almost limitless ranges. Formerly a large part of the Australian beef surplus was going to the United States, but we find that the sales there have been declining, one of the reasons being that they are getting a foothold in this country since the United States tariff has been increased.

I shall not read the whole letter, but it goes on to point out that steers are marketed in Australia at about \$17 per head, and they have no chance of competing against stock raised under such conditions.

During the debate with regard to the New Zealand treaty the objection seemed to be with regard to butter. Butter is too slippery for me to stand on, and I should like to ask this question: Why should we listen to the

[Mr. Cooté.]

complaint of the butter makers and agree to revise the treaty with New Zealand, and at the same time refuse to listen to the case brought forward by these stock growers and sheep men? Why make fish of one and flesh of another? That is one thing I cannot understand, and I think I am consistent in saying that if this house signifies by a large vote its approval of a revision of the New Zealand treaty, I do not see why we should not do away with the treaty with Australia. There is a provision in this treaty giving either country the privilege of abrogating it on six months' notice, and that is all we are asking the government to do.

I believe in low tariffs, and I believe that the farmers of western Canada cannot carry on their business successfully under a high tariff. The duties which were imposed on butter and eggs before the Australian treaty came into effect amounted to the equivalent of probably 10 per cent, and I believe that the farmers of western Canada would be willing to have all these articles on the free list if the government would put furniture, paints and oils, pumps, harness, kitchenware and all the rest of these things on the same level. But does any member of this house believe that the government, in negotiating a trade treaty with New Zealand or Australia, would be willing to put these things on a reciprocal basis? For instance, would the government reduce the duty on furniture and harness and a number of similar articles to the same level as the duty on butter and eggs? As I have said, I always have been an advocate of low tariffs, and when I have urged any reduction in the tariff it has not been on any article which was listed at anything like 10 per cent. I think there are many things on which the duty should be reduced.

One hon. member has charged us with being under the dictation of our organization, the United Farmers of Alberta. I am no more under the dictation of the United Farmers of Alberta, Mr. Speaker, than he is under the dictation of the Liberal party, and in fact not nearly so much. I was nominated by the United Farmers of Alberta in my constituency; my campaign was financed by the United Farmers of Alberta in my constituency, and as a rule I report to them once a year, at their annual convention. They have never attempted to dictate to me in any way. The United Farmers of Alberta is a body of farmers who have organized together for mutual assistance, mutual help and I might say mutual protection. Their motto is "Equal rights to all", and in asking for the abrogation of this treaty I believe I am living up to that motto.