

*Australian Treaty—Mr. Stewart (Edmonton)*

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Two weeks ago in Chicago and two weeks ago in New York the quotations were one cent lower than Canadian prices.

Mr. McGIBBON: That was not the case yesterday.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): There may be fluctuations. My hon. friend will not deny that there is very little difference in the price to-day, but a year ago and two years ago he was making the welkin ring in regard to having for food products a protected market such as the United States has. We do not hear that now. It was that which brought me to my feet on this occasion, because I am not in the habit of making speeches in the house. My hon. friends are attempting to take advantage of a situation that is only temporary, because as I say—and my hon. friend can look up the figures and see whether or not I am wrong—at least seven years out of ten we shall be on an export basis so far as butter and other food products are concerned. If Canada is to progress, to go forward, we must have markets for those food products. It will be generations before we can consume all that we can produce in this country.

The complaint of hon. gentlemen opposite is that we have not protected our home market. Without going into details or giving figures, I state most emphatically that within the last five years we have increased our manufacturing to a greater degree than in any other five year period in the history of Canada. That was not done by increasing tariffs; rather the reverse. Then we are criticized by some hon. gentlemen for not decreasing tariffs still further. When we find ourselves in a situation such as I have described, with a market that consumes more than it produces of but one commodity, perhaps two—because we have to import bacon at the present time, whereas formerly we were exporting bacon—we are told that we should right-about-face and declare that the policy that we have followed, and under which our trade and manufacturing has developed to a greater degree than ever before, is all wrong. It is a perfect absurdity. If hon. gentlemen opposite were in office to-morrow, and they increased the duty against American or Australian butter, they would put our agriculturists in the same position as that in which the American agriculturists find themselves to-day, and the United States government, in that highly protected country, is at the present time offering various kinds of encouragement to the American farmer. With

[Mr Bennett.]

a surplus production, the export price regulates the price in the home market. That is a situation that we cannot get over. I might believe in protection were it not for this very stubborn fact that faces me upon every occasion.

Mr. McQUARRIE: Are the American farmers asking for lower tariffs?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): The American farmers are asking for money these days. They tried tariff relief and found out the fallacy of it. Now they are seeking relief from some other quarter.

Mr. McQUARRIE: They want higher tariffs.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Not higher tariffs; they tried that. That is not the solution of the problem in any country that must be an exporting country, and it needs no argument to convince hon. gentlemen opposite of that fact. Everybody knows that you cannot assist the farmer by putting a tariff on the goods that he must export, and which fixes the market price in his own country.

With respect to the motion of my hon. friend, I intend to vote against it. I do not say that this treaty is a perfect one. I do not say that changes might not be made in it perhaps to the mutual benefit of both countries. I quite realize what my hon. friend says, that there have been mutterings from Australia to the effect that in their opinion they are not getting a fair deal out of this treaty, and that they would like to revamp it. So far as we are concerned, having proper regard for the interests of this country, we are perfectly willing to do so. I am going to vote against the motion as well as against the amendment.

Hon. R. J. MANION (Fort William): At this late hour I do not intend to delay the house more than five or ten minutes at the most. I sat here and listened to my hon. friend who has just taken his seat (Mr. Stewart, Edmonton) as I have to the remarks of various other ministers, and heard him repeat over and over again—he said it four or five times in the fifteen minutes he was up—that we have never had such a prosperous five year period as during the time this government has been in office. I do not mind saying that, although hon. gentlemen opposite sometimes accuse us of crying blue ruin when we tell the truth, I am not going to let that deter me from stating the facts. I say that never before in the history of this country as far back as I can remember, and I can remember back a few years at least,