

tistically tells us was all settled before it came down to the House. I am surprised at the hon. member putting that forward and calling it argument. Then he says the second question they decided was whether there was to be one province or two. 'We' decided that there were to be two provinces. Who decided that? I say that question has not been decided yet, and it should not be decided until it comes before the members of this House, who have an equal interest in it with the hon. member for Western Assiniboia. Then he tells us that the next question 'we' decided was that the dividing line should be the 4th meridian. Again I ask what right had the hon. gentleman and a few other western representatives to decide that? I think these hon. gentlemen are arrogating to themselves a great deal too much. The hon. gentleman tells us that he has a right to speak for the people of Western Assiniboia because he represents them. I am inclined to think that when he goes back there he will find that the people will tell him that he does not represent their views. He puts forth as an argument that the Board of Trade of Maple Creek has decided with reference to the boundary line. How many ranchers, I would like to ask him, are on the Board of Trade of Maple Creek? I will venture to say that there is not one.

Mr. SCOTT. I will venture to say that nearly every member of the Board of Trade is directly interested in ranching.

Mr. HENDERSON. The hon. gentleman is very venturesome, but we all know how boards of trade are constituted. The Board of Trade of Maple Creek is made up of business men of that place, and not of people engaged in farming or ranching, and it is the same with regard to the Board of Trade of Medicine Hat.

Mr. SCOTT. Will the hon. gentleman permit me? I tell him that it is a matter of my own knowledge that most of the business men of Maple Creek are directly interested in ranching.

Mr. HENDERSON. So am I directly interested in ranching in that country. I am directly interested in the prosperity of that country, the agricultural interest and the ranching interest, just the same as the men living within a hundred miles of Maple Creek.

Mr. SCOTT. My hon. friend is mis-stating my meaning. The business men of Maple Creek are directly interested in ranching by owning stock running on the ranges in that district. That is a different sense from the sense which the hon. gentleman is trying to read into my statement.

Mr. HENDERSON. I do not think it is reasonable to believe that all the business men of Maple Creek are engaged in ranch-

Mr. HENDERSON.

ing. They are business men engaged in business operations.

Mr. SCOTT. I rise to a point of order. I made a statement from personal knowledge and I think the rule of the House is that the hon. gentleman should accept a statement of that kind.

Mr. HENDERSON. I will accept the statement of the hon. gentleman, but I will tell him that I have to accept a great deal. I will accept it for what it is worth and allow the House to form its own estimate. I say again that the Board of Trade of Maple Creek is more likely to be composed of business men of that locality than of men who live 100 or 200 miles away. This new province extends hundreds of miles in length, and people engaged in this business live hundreds of miles away and are probably not interested in Maple Creek at all, but they are particularly interested in this boundary line. I pay very little attention to the opinions expressed by those boards of trade dealing with a matter which refers to the country at large, in which possibly they have very little personal knowledge, notwithstanding the statement of the hon. gentleman, which I accept as far as it may possibly go, applying to it reasonable common sense. It is not to be supposed that in arriving at the proper definition of the lines between these two provinces, all interests can be reconciled; but I do think that by coming together—not by deciding the question before it comes into the House at all; not by deciding it on political lines, or in any other way except in the interests of the people who are there—and deciding the question on the basis of what would be in the best interests of that country, we can arrive at a compromise. And if we should have to deviate a little from the proposition decided upon by the hon. member for West Assiniboia, our conclusion would be more to the advantage of the people of the west. I was very much impressed with the suggestion made by the hon. member for Hamilton (Mr. Barker); and if this matter had not been decided before the Bill was introduced it might have been a good thing to have made one new province out of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Assiniboia. I think that would have been an excellent proposition, and allow Athabaska to be dealt with as a territory for the next 25 or 30 years. However, I presume matters have gone too far to accomplish anything of that kind now, and it remains for us to make the best of what I call a bad bargain. I do certainly approve of the proposition made by the hon. member for Calgary. I think it is well to bring the dividing line eastward 60 or 70 miles, so as to include the ranching country, because there is considerable unanimity with regard to the extent of the territory covered by ranching. Then run northward, until you strike the Saskatchewan; westward then following the