

list, as would have saved us from the imposition of the duty on cocoa, which after all, is a matter of some importance to a very large number of our people. A trade arrangement that has in it no more element of benefit to the people of Canada than this arrangement has is not one that is deserving of the commendation or endorsement of Parliament.

I would like to know why when Canada is to-day-giving the West Indies a 33½ per cent preference, it was necessary in the negotiation of this agreement to provide for an apparent limitation of 20 per cent. We now import these goods at a 33½ per cent preference, and we hope to continue doing so. Is it because we have in power a Government so wedded to the idea of higher tariff that in making this arrangement they were bound to protect their principles so that whenever they saw fit to remove that 33½ per cent advantage which the consumer now has they would be free to do it without violating the agreement? It is a protection of protection. Is it in the minds of our hon. friends that they are going to establish a limit of Imperial trade preference of 20 per cent, and that this West Indian agreement is the forerunner of an Imperial preference of 20 per cent instead of 33½ per cent? If there is no such purpose behind this 20 per cent arrangement, for what reason has it been placed upon the statute-book? If it is not merely a declaration that has no effect it must indicate an intention on the part of the Government to constitute 20 per cent the limit of preference that will be given under our customs tariff hereafter. Is that the reason why this very remarkable treaty has been made in such a manner that it is ineffective to benefit the trade of Canada but effective to lay additional burdens on the people of Canada?

On section 5—Restrictions, control of rates:

Mr. PUGSLEY: It is stated in the New York papers that the Government have come to an arrangement with the Canadian Pacific railway for a West India service for a sum of \$400,000 a year. Has such an arrangement been concluded with the Canadian Pacific railway?

Mr. FOSTER: I have already stated that no conclusion has been come to. If a conclusion had been arrived at I would have been able to announce it this afternoon.

Mr. PUGSLEY: It would be important that the committee should have a statement of the terms which the Government propose to exact from the steamship companies. What are the services in regard to which tenders have been called for? Before we dispose of this matter and before the Government enters into an agreement this committee ought to have some

information. After the bargain is once made and an agreement entered into with a steamship company for a number of years it will be too late for members to express their views, it will be of no advantage to do so, whereas if we had the information beforehand we might be able to make some suggestions that would be entitled to some consideration. I would like my hon. friend to inform the House, not now, but on the third reading, as to the proposed requirements of the service. I think that a great mistake has been made in the past in insisting upon a combined service to St. John and Halifax. The only way to make this service a success is to have it direct from Halifax and direct from the port of St. John. It is utterly absurd to my mind to require steamers to make both ports. You will never have a satisfactory service under those conditions. May I ask my hon. friend, if, on the third reading, he will give information to the House as to the conditions of the proposed service in respect to which tenders have been called.

Mr. FOSTER: I shall try to do that, though I cannot say positively. I want to settle that matter before I leave, and I shall give all the information to the House that I can. If I am able to give it on the third reading I shall be very glad.

Mr. PUGSLEY: There is one other matter. Under this agreement the Governor in Council is to have the power to issue a proclamation providing that, in order to enjoy the preferential rates contained in the treaty, the goods must be brought by steamship direct to a Canadian port. I want to know whether my hon. friend is prepared to hold out an expectation to this House that that proclamation will issue at an early date, or whether it is simply put there with a view to providing something that may be brought into effect in the distant future. Is it bona fide intended to issue that proclamation in the near future? What the people of St. John, Halifax and the St. Lawrence ports want to know is whether it is intended to go on conducting this business between Canada and the West Indies through foreign ports, or whether at an early date there is to be a bona fide and energetic determination to limit this preference to goods brought through Canadian ports.

Mr. FOSTER: Many years ago, I find, there was enacted such a provision as this in the Customs Tariff Act. It reads:

On and after a date to be named by the Governor in Council, in a proclamation published in the Canada Gazette, the British preferential tariff shall apply only to goods brought into Canada by ship direct to a Canadian seaport.