

a view to obtaining the reduction of customs duties now granted to British goods, upon all Belgian importations to Canada under the terms of the Anglo-Belgian treaty of 1863?

2. What action does the Government intend taking in regard to the claims put forth by importers of Belgian goods in Montreal that they are entitled to a reduction of duty in virtue of the above treaty?

The **CONTROLLER OF CUSTOMS** (Mr. Paterson). The answer to the first question is "yes." In answering the second question, perhaps it would be satisfactory to the hon. gentleman and to the House, if I answered it by reading a communication that has been sent to the Belgian Consul, in reply to a letter received from him :

Ottawa, April 29th, 1897.

Consul General of Belgium, Montreal, P.Q.

Sir,—I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 24th instant, addressed to the Honourable Controller of Customs, with reference to a reduction of one-eighth of the duties on Belgium goods imported into Canada.

In reply, I am directed to state that the resolutions introduced into the House of Commons respecting the Reciprocal Tariff, provide :

That when the customs tariff of any country admits the products of Canada on terms which, on the whole, are as favourable to Canada as the terms of the Reciprocal Tariff herein referred to, are to the countries to which it may apply, articles which are the growth, produce or manufacture of such country, when imported direct therefrom, may then be imported direct into Canada, or taken out of warehouse for consumption therein, at the reduced rates of duty provided in the Reciprocal Tariff set forth in Schedule D.

(a) That any questions that may arise as to the countries entitled to the benefits of the Reciprocal Tariff, shall be decided by the Controller of Customs, subject to the authority of the Governor in Council.

(b) That the Controller of Customs may make such regulations as are necessary for carrying out the intention of the two preceding sections.

The Hon. Controller of Customs is not satisfied that the customs tariff of Belgium is such as to entitle the country to the benefits of the Reciprocal Tariff, but he will be pleased to receive any information that you may wish to furnish on that subject.

The Hon. Controller is advised that the treaty to which you refer, relates to a condition of affairs which does not arise under the tariff resolutions now before the House of Commons.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your obedient servant,

That letter is signed by the Commissioner of Customs.

GOVERNMENT COMMISSIONERS AND POLITICS.

Mr. QUINN (for Mr. Monk) asked :

1. Has D. A. Lafortune, advocate, of Montreal, been commissioned by the Government to hold an inquiry into the administration of the St. Vincent de Paul Penitentiary?

2. Has Wilfrid Mercier, advocate, of Montreal, been commissioned by the Government to inquire into charges laid against Mr. Daoust, superintendent of St. Ann Lock, in Jacques Cartier county?

Mr. QUINN.

3. How much per day do these commissioners receive for expenses or otherwise?

4. Is the Government aware that both these commissioners are taking an active part in the provincial campaign in Quebec, and does the Government approve of such a course?

The **PRIME MINISTER** (Mr. Laurier). G. A. Lafortune, advocate, of Montreal, has been commissioned by the Government to hold an inquiry into the administration of the St. Vincent de Paul Penitentiary. Wilfrid Mercier, advocate, of Montreal, has been commissioned to hold one of the inquiries, I cannot say whether it is into the case of Mr. Daoust or not. I cannot state at this moment the rate of remuneration they receive. The Government is not aware that these commissioners are taking an active part in the provincial campaign in Quebec.

INFRACTION OF INLAND REVENUE LAWS.

Sir ADOLPHE CARON (for Mr. Dugas) rose to ask :

Why was the sentence of imprisonment carried out against J. Jobin, of Pont Rouge, for an infraction of the Inland Revenue laws, and not against George Vézina, of Quebec, convicted under the same laws?

Mr. **SPEAKER**. Before this question is put, I assume, as it makes two positive statements, that these statements are the result of some answers already given in the House. Otherwise the question would not be in order.

The **CONTROLLER OF INLAND REVENUE** (Sir Henri Joly de Lotbinière). I am ready to answer the question. J. Jobin was sentenced to imprisonment in January, 1896, and sentence was carried out in April, 1896, under the late Government. George Vézina was sentenced to imprisonment in March, 1896, and the sentence was not carried out. I am unable to explain why the late Government did not insist in carrying out the sentence in both cases.

DR. NAPOLEON LAVOIE.

Sir ADOLPHE CARON (for Mr. Dugas) asked :

1. Was Dr. Napoléon Lavoie, of L'Islet, commander of the SS. "Aberdeen," ever in the employ of the Government of Canada before in any other capacity?

2. If so, in what capacity?

3. Was he ever in command of the SS. "Lady Head"?

4. If so, was he dismissed from said position after investigation, and for what reason?

The **MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES** (Mr. Davies). 1. Yes, as commander of schooner "La Canadienne" and steamer "Lady Head." 2. Fishery officer in charge of the gulf division and commander of above named vessels. 3. Yes. 4.