

the whole" in the preferential clause of the tariff. Does it mean "on the average"?

The **CONTROLLER OF CUSTOMS** (Mr. Paterson). Without being in any degree desirous of treating the hon. gentleman's question slightly, I am forced to say that I put upon them the interpretation that the words bear. I do not know any other interpretation to put upon those words "on the whole."

Mr. **McNEILL**. My hon. friend, I am sure, does not mean to be discourteous in any way; but as a good many hon. members have felt it a little difficult to construe those words, I thought there would be no impropriety in asking my hon. friend whether those words mean "on the average," or what they do mean.

The **MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES** (Mr. Davies). What other suggestion do you make?

Mr. **McNEILL**. I do not make any suggestion; I want to know if they mean "on the average."

The **MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES**. I thought you were suggesting that they had two or three meanings.

Mr. **McNEILL**. Would that be a fair explanation of the term?

The **CONTROLLER OF CUSTOMS**. As applied to Great Britain?

Mr. **McNEILL**. Not necessarily to Great Britain alone.

The **CONTROLLER OF CUSTOMS**. Perhaps this would be more satisfactory to the hon. gentleman. I do not understand that if a country admitted one, or two, or half a dozen articles at as low a rate as those articles are mentioned in our classification, that would entitle such country to preferential treatment. Does that answer the hon. gentleman's question?

Mr. **McNEILL**. To a certain extent, but it does not go quite far enough. Supposing that the tariff of a country, on an average—

Mr. **SPEAKER**. I think this is out of order.

Mr. **McNEILL**. Of course, if you say so. I think this is a question of great interest to the House.

Mr. **SPEAKER**. If the Collector of Customs is not ready to make an answer now, there can be no discussion.

Mr. **McNEILL**. I thought he was willing.

The **MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES**. I would like the hon. gentleman to suggest the alternative meanings that he has in his mind.

Mr. **McNEILL**. I do not wish to make any suggestion at all; I only wanted to understand what the words mean.

The **MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES**. If the hon. gentleman has not some alternative meaning in his mind, how can he be in doubt.

Mr. **McNEILL**. My desire is to know whether this condition of things would cover this case. Suppose that, on the average, the tariff of a country is as low as our tariff "D" is upon the average—would that cover the meaning of the words?

The **CONTROLLER OF CUSTOMS**. At this moment the only country that I have decided comes practically within its meaning is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

Mr. **FOSTER**. Will the hon. gentleman allow me to ask him whether he has made any report to Council with reference to that?

Some hon. **MEMBERS**. Order.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE TARIFF.

House resumed adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. Fielding:

That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair, for the House to go into Committee of Ways and Means.

The **CONTROLLER OF CUSTOMS** (Mr. Paterson). I think you will agree with me, Mr. Speaker, that, having listened with pleasure and much instruction to the four hon. gentlemen who have already addressed the House upon this subject at such great length, it will not be necessary for those who follow in the debate to go as fully into all matters connected therewith; therefore I shall content myself with touching upon a few points. I may notice, in the first place, that before the introduction of the tariff our hon. friends opposite seemed to be displeased that it was not brought down sooner and now I am bound to say, after listening to the utterances of some of them that it having been brought down, they do not seem to be pleased with it, and they do not seem to be in a pleasant mood in any respect. If I may judge from the remarks of the hon. the ex-Minister of Finance, I think he was not entirely satisfied with the tariff resolutions when they were laid upon the Table. I also think, after listening to my hon. friend the late Premier last night, when he declared those resolutions to be a jumble of a tariff, to be unconstitutional, to be a transcendent folly, that after making the usual discount for the hon. gentleman's strong language, I would be warranted in inferring that he does not absolutely endorse these resolutions in all their details. Let me notice first the charge that is made, and it seems a wrong one, that by delay of the Government in bringing down the tariff resolutions, the trade of the country has been paralyzed, that great injury had been done to the country, as if the Government, by failing to introduce it sooner, had shown themselves unfit for the management of the af-