

carry in Canada to-day when it never succeeded in winning an election before. Our friends opposed reciprocity which was the only salvation for eastern Canada and for western Canada. They stated that it was most unpatriotic to have our freight going north and south instead of east and west. We must ship our goods through Canadian ports to England! We must not sell to the Yankees! But what did they do themselves? They were not in power very long when, by order in council, they put into operation piecemeal the leading provisions of the reciprocity pact. On the 16th April, 1917, by an order in council, they put wheat, wheat flour and semolina upon the free list.

Mr. SPENCE: That was in war time.

Mr. KYTE: Yes, and they remained upon the free list until the Republican party wiped out their end of the reciprocity, and then it failed.

Wheat, wheat flour, potatoes, when imported from a country which does not impose a customs duty on like products grown or manufactured in Canada, were made free by act of parliament on the 6th June, 1919. They were very anxious that there should be no shipping of our products to the United States in 1911; but in 1917, 1918 and 1919, as the election approached, with an eye to the western farmer and the Progressive movement in the west, they thought it would not be a bad thing after all to do a little in the way of reciprocity for them.

I come to the question of the coal duties, and it might be well, by way of preliminary, to give a short summary of the history of coal duties in this country. In 1879, an act was passed imposing a duty of fifty cents per ton on coal of all kinds, regardless of price or quality. A year later the duty on bituminous coal was raised to sixty cents per ton. In 1887 anthracite coal was made free, the duty on bituminous coal remaining as before at sixty cents per ton. In 1894 the customs tariff was consolidated and it contained the following items:

Coal, bituminous, 60 cents per ton; coal dust, n.e.s., 20 per cent ad valorem; coal, anthracite and anthracite dust, free.

In 1897 the tariff was revised and the schedule relating to coal was as follows:

Coal, bituminous, such as will pass through a half-inch screen, 20 per cent ad valorem but not to exceed 13 cents per ton; coal, bituminous, round and run of mine and coal, n.e.s., 53 cents per ton; coal, anthracite and anthracite dust, free.

In the session of 1906-07 the tariff was again revised giving effect to the following rates:

[Mr. Kyte.]

Coal, anthracite and anthracite dust and coke, free; coal, bituminous, such as will pass through a three-quarter inch screen, 10 cents preferential, 12 cents intermediate, 14 cents general; coal, bituminous, round and run of mine and coal n.e.s., 35 cents preferential, 45 cents intermediate, 53 cents general.

In 1923 lignite was included in item 586 and made free of duty. That is the history of the changes in the tariff on coal prior to the present time. Hon. members will observe that the duty upon slack coal was made fourteen cents per ton whereas the duty upon round coal was reduced from sixty to fifty-three cents per ton.

The duties have remained in that position up to the present time. I was a member of and I accompanied a delegation from Nova Scotia which appeared before the government in the month of December last asking for an increase in the duty on slack coal. I have been assailed on many sides on account of this, and even my gallant and genial friend the hon. member for Kingston (Mr. Ross) shied a pebble at my emaciated person during the debate on the Address. I have nothing to apologize for with respect to my attitude upon that question. When the duty upon round coal was fixed at fifty-three cents and the duty upon slack coal was fixed at fourteen cents a ton, there was no demand for slack coal. It was a waste product for the coal operators. In recent years, owing to changes in the system of using coal, in the manufacture of boilers and in the grates, slack coal is now used more largely in some instances than run-of-mine coal. Is there, therefore, any justification for maintaining a duty of fifty-three cents per ton upon round coal and having a duty of fourteen cents per ton upon another class of coal which is equally valuable for industrial purposes? You might as well, with respect to the tariff on boots and shoes, have a tariff of twenty-five per cent upon boots and a tariff of five per cent upon shoes. Any hon. gentleman would appreciate how absurd that would be, but it is no more absurd than the idea of maintaining different duties upon these two classes of coal. I desire also to point out to the House that slack coal is not used for domestic purposes. It is used entirely for industrial purposes. The present tariff changes reduce the duty upon round coal to the domestic consumer at the same time that they increase the duty upon slack coal for the person who requires it for industrial purposes. When the hon. member for Brome (Mr. McMaster) was speaking upon the budget, he referred to his adherence to a policy of free trade, but he said that he was willing to run a coach and four through his economic theories if, by so doing he was relieving distress and unemployment in the coal districts of