

sake of the argument, that we import molasses both from France and from the United States. We have no treaty with the United States, but we have a treaty with France. Now we are asked to ratify a treaty with the West Indies fixing duties at four-fifths. Do goods coming from the West Indies pay four-fifths of the duty on similar goods coming from the United States, with which we have no treaty, or four-fifths of the duty on similar goods coming from France with which we have a treaty? Would the Minister of Justice give us an opinion on the question?

Mr. DOHERTY: I have to confess that my powers or ability to 'understand things better than most people' does not enable me to understand the hon. member's misunderstanding of that provision.

Mr. PUGSLEY: The Minister of Justice has given a clear and easily understood opinion. If, in the opinions which he gave before he left the bar, he took equal pains to elucidate the points on which his opinion was asked, I can well imagine the large fees he must have received for his advice. Is that not worthy of consideration? In reading the clause at first I was of the opinion that the four-fifths duty would be four-fifths of the highest duty which would be paid on goods coming from any country in the world with which we had no arrangement.

Mr. FOSTER: Where did you get the idea of highest?

Mr. PUGSLEY: If you did not view it from that standpoint, you would make the duty absolutely uncertain.

Mr. FOSTER: Would not you make it equally uncertain if it was the highest?

Mr. PUGSLEY: No.

Mr. FOSTER: There is only one highest and one lowest.

Mr. MACLEAN (Halifax): There is an intermediate.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Take the case of the United States; I presume goods coming from the United States pay the highest duty exacted by the Customs Department of Canada from those of any country in the world.

Mr. FOSTER: Not at all.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Why not?

Mr. FOSTER: We would have a tariff for each country.

Mr. PUGSLEY: We have an intermediate tariff applying to France, and an ordinary tariff applying to the United States, and those countries with which we have no treaty. Now, is this four-fifths—

Mr. PUGSLEY.

Mr. FOSTER: My hon. friend should not get away from the question. He made a very strong assertion a moment ago, to the effect that goods coming from the United States paid higher duties than those coming from any other country.

Mr. PUGSLEY: They do pay a higher duty than those coming from some other countries.

Mr. FOSTER: They will not pay higher than those that are not under the most favoured nation or preference treatment.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Then they are among the highest; they belong to the highest class.

Mr. FOSTER: They are among them. Yes.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Is the four-fifths to be four-fifths of the duty on goods from those countries with respect to which there is the highest tariff?

Mr. FOSTER: Does it say so?

Mr. PUGSLEY: I asked my hon. friend the question.

Mr. FOSTER: The hon. gentleman can read English.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Which is it?

Mr. FOSTER: It is plain and simple enough. Goods coming from the West Indies, under that clause, pay four-fifths of the duty imposed on similar goods imported from any foreign country.

Mr. MACDONALD: What about the several rates?

Mr. FOSTER: If there are several rates, they get the lowest.

Mr. MACDONALD. The statute says several rates; there should be some clearer definiteness.

Mr. PUGSLEY: My hon. friend forgets that by this clause he has fixed a tariff with the West Indies at four-fifths of the tariff that is imposed on goods coming from any other country. Now we will take a certain article. The duty on that article—say a ton—coming from the United States, is \$100. If goods coming from the West Indies pay four-fifths of that, it will be four-fifths of \$100—\$80. Similar goods coming from France will pay on the ton, say \$80, and four-fifths of that amount would be \$64. Are goods of similar character coming from the West Indies to pay \$80, or \$64? The hon. minister says that our treaty with France is in some way concerned with this—

Mr. FOSTER: I did not say our treaty with France was concerned with this; I said nothing about our treaty with France.