

origin, and not their value in the United States. It does not say that for the purpose of fixing the rate of duty they should be treated as a direct importation; it is confined strictly to the point of valuation. I do not think that the Minister of Trade and Commerce, when he interprets that clause, will say that I am in error. I do not think that any lawyer in this House will say that I am in error. The Department of Customs, perhaps in order to encourage West India trade through the port of New York pending the establishment of proper steamship connection with Canadian ports, has allowed these indirect importations. That is no reason why we should continue to wink at this practice now that we are seeking to get a direct service between Canada and the West Indies. But, as I have said, this Bill, if it becomes law, will entirely alter the arrangement made between Canada and the West Indies. While I am on my feet, let me call attention to another anomaly in this Bill. It provides that these goods from the West Indies are to be entitled to this preference, not merely if imported direct from the West Indies, but if imported from any British country. Why is that? Suppose that goods are taken from the West Indies to England, warehoused there, and then brought from England to Canada, why should they be entitled to the same rate of duty? Why is it not limited to goods coming direct from these colonies? Why, for instance, might the wholesale merchants in Newfoundland, which colony is no party to this agreement, be allowed to import goods from the West Indies, thereby encouraging that trade, and then send these goods to Canada under the reduced duty? If the hon. gentleman is going to qualify the terms of the treaty in the manner proposed, why extend it to other British countries which are not parties to the agreement? Evidently the language has been taken from the statute relating to the British preference and extending to the West Indies, without having any regard to the altered circumstances arising out of this being a specific agreement made with these West Indian colonies. There is another extraordinary feature of this Bill that, when the time comes, under section 5—

Mr. FOSTER: Might I suggest that my hon. friend should confine himself to the question under consideration? Surely, after having used up so much time as we have, when we come down now to a simple discussion, and with a view to passing this clause, he cannot jump from clause to clause.

Mr. PUGSLEY: I would like to meet the hon. gentleman's view. He ought not

Mr. PUGSLEY.

to complain about two days being spent in the discussion of these matters, more especially when he to-day is coming in with an amendment of a most important character, made in view of the objections which have been raised on this side of the House, an amendment to make provision in regard to goods which would come in under schedule C, in regard to which the Minister of Customs, who is supposed to look after this matter, gives a most extraordinary explanation, and gave this Committee to understand that the omission had been made deliberately and professed to give a good reason for it. The Minister of Trade and Commerce comes to-day and says that after thinking the matter over he agrees with the observations made on this side of the House and finds it necessary to amend the Bill. The hon. gentleman's impatience should not lead him to rush the Bill through, because, as I have said, it is of great importance and ought to be considered carefully. If it is the hon. gentleman's desire that I should confine myself just now to the section under discussion, he will not complain if, later, I deal with the phases which will arise on consideration of section 5. Then, I will just refer very briefly to paragraph (b) of section 3. I do suggest that my hon. friend, having had a night to consider the matter, and having determined to amend the Bill as he has indicated, and has to provide that, so long as the British preference continues, goods from the islands which are parties to this treaty shall come in under the terms of that preference, he ought to state to this Committee whether it is or is not, the policy of the Government to continue the British preference. I think it desirable that the people of this country should know whether it is intended to continue the policy which was inaugurated by this country fifteen or sixteen years ago. It is important because of the fact that one of the great political parties in England has been making the assertion that they learn from Canada and the other overseas dominions that have granted a preference that it cannot be expected, speaking particularly of Canada, that Canada will continue to give this preference unless the Mother Country gives a preference in return. That statement is made by English statesmen and they profess to give as their authority the views of Canadian statesmen. Surely we have a right to know, when asked to consider the advantages or otherwise of this treaty, whether or not Canada is going to barter with respect to this question of British preference or whether we will continue what we gave voluntarily fifteen years ago to the Mother Country. That policy has been to the advantage of Canada as well as of the Mother Country and it will continue to be to the advantage of both countries. The people of