

On this occasion Mr. Hincks, made some remarks, which are reported as follows in the journals of the day :

Mr. HINCKS was as staunch an advocate of theoretical free trade as the hon. member; but his views had been changed by experience, and he was now convinced that to legislate irrespective of other nations was not a wise course. It was admitted, that if England had adopted another course in 1846, reciprocity might have been obtained from the U. States. He believed that a commercial treaty might be made even now; but not by conceding everything the Americans might desire. He complained that instead of all parties standing together in this country, as in the United States, industrious efforts were made in Upper Canada to intimate to the United States what they might do to counteract this policy. This was done principally westward of Belleville, by a parcel of small merchants, actuated by the most selfish motives, who did not want to have their relations with the United States disturbed. He did not, however, fear these people: they might do their worst. The greatest enemies of reciprocal free trade, were Canadians themselves. It had been frequently said by Canadian newspapers that we did not offer enough; but the fact was, we had last year imported more goods from the United States of those included in the lists of reciprocity, than we had exported to them. One thing must be admitted by the most ultra free trader, and that was, that it was an advantage to have our goods going into the United States. The only way to obtain this, was to get a sufficient number of people interested to get the question fairly taken up. The only time it was taken up, it fell through in the Senate, after an unanimous vote in the House. He thought the Senate had a majority in its favour; and it had been recommended by the President. Now, it was all very well to talk of retaliation; but he happened to know the effect produced on the American mind by the Imperial action on the fishery question, was most advantageous to this country, notwithstanding all that had been said at first about driving all our men of war back again. He did not know how any men with British or Canadian feeling, could see the position of our shipping at present without humiliation. Their vessels now passed through all our waters, and ours could not enter one of theirs. So that if the Saint Lawrence and Champlain canal were opened, things remaining as they are, American vessels would pass from Lake Superior to New York by this navigation, while Canadian vessels would be driven quite off the waters. He was willing to trade with the Americans on fair terms,—to give them even what was more than he thought reasonable; but he could see no reason why, with people who would make no concession to us, we should not try to get from them, on our canals, all the tolls we can.