

reciprocity to a large extent, as far as it would not cripple vested interests or discriminate against the mother country. We found our people loyal to the Empire, and we found the hon. gentlemen on the other side were not consistent with themselves. The moment we asked, "Does unrestricted reciprocity mean commercial union, or does it discriminate against the other colonies or the mother country?" they would not undertake to define it. In my country they would not undertake anything which would discriminate against the Empire of which we form a part. They believe that our best interest is to trade with Great Britain and the colonies, rather than confine our trade to the United States, and they would not have unrestricted reciprocity if it would have the effect of preventing trade with other parts of the Empire. Although my hon. friend opened the discussion in a proper way, I am sure he does not believe in his heart that it is prudent that this *modus vivendi* should not be continued for another year. The leader of the House stated in the most clear and succinct manner the reasons why the Bill should pass; it needs no further explanation. I hope that such negotiations will be carried out at the meeting of the Canadian delegates with those of the United States as will tend to closer relations between the two countries, and that nothing shall be done by us which would prevent the success of those negotiations. Although the fishermen of our country may be injured by the continuance of the *modus vivendi*, yet, patriotic and loyal as they are, and identified as they are with the whole interest of Canada, they are prepared to forego their rights for another year in the hope that these vexed questions, now pending between the two countries, shall be amicably settled in the interests of both countries.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—I do not propose to follow my hon. friend from Halifax into a discussion of the question of unrestricted reciprocity at this moment. I think my hon. friend from Shell River will shortly give us an opportunity of doing that at greater length and more appropriately, perhaps, to the question at issue, although, undoubtedly, what my hon. friend said did bear on the question of reading this Bill the second time; but we have already had placed before this House a very plain and clear state-

ment of what is now going on. My hon. friend asks me to give some more definite information as to the kind of negotiations proposed; he even goes so far as to ask me what kind of a treaty we propose to make with the United States about reciprocity. As to what kind of negotiations are proposed to be carried on, His Excellency, in his Address to the House, states:—

"My advisers, availing themselves of opportunities which were presented in the closing months of last year, caused the Administration of the United States to be reminded of the willingness of the Government of Canada to join in making efforts for the extension and development of the trade between the Republic and the Dominion, as well as for the friendly adjustment of those matters of an international character which remain unsettled. I am pleased to say that these representations have resulted in an assurance that, in October next, the Government of the United States will be prepared to enter on a conference to consider the best means of arriving at a practical solution of these important questions. The papers relating to this subject will be laid before you."

It seems to me there is a very fair statement as to the purpose of the intended conference with the United States Government. It is to settle, amongst other questions, this very one about the fisheries, if possible; and as to the kind of treaty we propose to make, we want to make the best one we can. That is precisely the kind of treaty we intend to make. Hon. gentlemen may call it by what name they please, but I think the Government are not to be restricted at this, or at any other moment previous to the negotiation, to exact lines as to the precise articles in which they hope to have extended trade relations with the United States. It is very probable they may come to the conclusion which my hon. friend indicated, and stated he believed they held already, that they would not enter into a treaty which would discriminate against other countries. It is very probable that some consideration of that kind may guide them, and I think we have every reason to believe that it may be so: because, if I remember right, last session this House passed a resolution stating that it disapproved of any policy that would discriminate against the mother country, or any of the colonies in favour of any foreign nation. On the motion of my hon. friend from New Brunswick I think such a resolution was unanimously passed. I may also venture to decline to descend to the lower and—I do not know but that my hon. friend so considered it—polluted region of the past election, but I am certain that this House is not