

loping these resources. The honourable gentleman spoke of the desirability of reciprocity negotiations with the United States. But if we are doing so well as my honourable friend says we are doing, I do not exactly apprehend the reason why we should seek to alter conditions that, according to his view, are so eminently favourable at the present time. But as these negotiations are going on I would be inclined to think that the country ought to have some idea of the principles upon which they are proceeding, and of the policy of the government in respect thereto.

Now we know that under a system of party government, if any administration in Canada, whether Liberal or Conservative, brings down a treaty of that kind for ratification to parliament after the treaty has once been made, it stands a very good chance of being put through the House, because the fate of the government rests upon the fate of the treaty. I think, therefore, it is fair and right, not only to the members of this House, but to the people of this country, that we should know upon what principle the government proposes to act. We do not desire any confidential communications that ought not to be disclosed. We understand thoroughly that details, and pour parlers, and confidential negotiations cannot be disclosed to us. But we do understand that the government of this country ought to let us know what we may expect from any treaty which they propose to negotiate, what are the benefits expected, on what manufactures or products is there to be a lowering of the duty, or is there to be a system of reciprocity.

Let us look at the conditions as they exist at present. A very eminent member of the Liberal party, a man who is a member of the government to-day, said years ago, before 1896, that a certain condition of affairs as regards trade between this country and the mother country on the one hand, and between this country and the United States of America on the other hand, constituted a real discrimination against the mother country. I say that those conditions are intensified to-day, and I would like to tell my right hon. friend what they are at the present time. Take the past six years ending with the fiscal year 1910, and we find that our total imports from the United States of dutiable goods amounted to \$581,279,255; and of free goods, \$502,252,420, or a total of \$1,083,531,675. During the same period our exports to the United States amounted to \$505,453,965, an excess of imports from the United States over exports to that country during the six years of \$477,077,710. In other words, we bought from the United States nearly \$500,000,000 worth of commodities over and above what they purchased from us. Let us now look at another side of the picture. During the same period of six years we imported from

Great Britain of dutiable goods \$341,721,022 of free goods, \$112,670,727, a total of \$454,391,749. Our exports to Great Britain during the same period were \$725,475,473, showing an excess of exports over imports amounting to \$271,083,724. That is to say the people of Great Britain purchased from us during that period nearly \$300,000,000 in excess of what we purchased from them.

Now, let us look for a moment at the duties. The average rate of duty on dutiable goods imported from the United States was 24.26; the average rate of duty on dutiable goods imported from Great Britain was 24.78. I have had these figures made up, I have not verified them personally; and I would be glad to have them corrected if they are not accurate; I believe them to be accurate. The average rate of duty on the total imports from the United States during that period was 13 per cent; the average rate of duty on the total imports from Great Britain during that period was 18.64 per cent. Now I would like the Prime Minister to take those things into consideration, and to have my hon. friend the Minister of Customs also consider them in proceeding with these tariff negotiations. I would like to say to him that so far as I am concerned I would hesitate, I would be reluctant to believe that my hon. friend the Minister of Customs has it in his mind or within his heart's desire to emphasize that condition which in the opinion of a very eminent colleague of his amounted to a virtual discrimination against Great Britain some fifteen or twenty years ago.

We may perhaps have some information from our right hon. friend on this question, and I trust it will be more satisfactory, and more definite, and more to the point than the information he gave to the people of the west with regard to the tariff.

My right hon. friend informed the people of the west that when he came to Montreal he proposed to speak to the people of Montreal about the Hudson Bay railway. I observe that when he came to Montreal he found a more insistent and a more urgent subject claiming his attention, and he did not mention the Hudson Bay railway to the people of Montreal. But he did touch there upon another subject, indeed he dwelt upon it at great length, a subject which has been alluded to by the mover and the seconder of this address, that is the Naval Bill which was passed at the last session of parliament, and which became law, providing for a Canadian naval service. I would like to say to my right hon. friend that I think possibly he may have discovered before to-day that the advice we tendered to him last year was after all sound advice. We represented to him that a scheme of permanent co-operation by Canada in the naval defence of the empire was a very great question indeed, and one upon which he might well seek the advice and the mandate of