Canadian railways, is to be under rules and regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury. Two United States inspectors are to accompany the cars through Canada, though the right of inspection properly begins and ends on the American sides of the frontier. If this sort of intervention is good for one of the international parties to the interchange of railway traffic, it ought to be good for both. So far, however, from this view being accepted in the bill put into the hands of Congressman Hitt, it is reversed the moment we come to Canadian cars passing in bond through the Republic. The Canadian cars are to be sealed on their entrance into American territory; a procedure to which no reasonable objection can be made, except that it causes unnecessary delay at the frontier. After being sealed they are to be taken possession of by Inspectors of Customs until they reach the final port, where they are to be subjected to inspection and appraisement, such as they would have had to undergo if the goods had arrived by water. What can be the object of this second detention, unless it be to put obstacles in the way of the traffic? All that would be necessary would be to see that the goods leave the country and do not enter for consumption in an illicit way. The detention could not be necessary even for statistical purposes, because the goods form no part of American exports properly speaking.

Section 4 directly aims to bring Canadian railways, situated in this country, outside of the United States, under the Interstate Commerce law. For this purpose it requires the manifest of each Canadian car that enters the Republic to contain, in addition to the ordinary requirements, such information as the Interstate Commerce Commission may require, as would tend to reveal any violation of the Inter state Commerce law, if the goods had been carried wholly within the United States. The object of this requirement is plainly to compel the Canadian railways proper to submit themselves to a foregn law. And to make such submission certain and effective, it is proposed to require Canadian railways to obtain a license for their cars to cross the boundary; and as a condition of obtaining such license, the owners of the Canadian roads are to come under an obligation to conform to the Inter State Law, as they would be bound to do if all the business were done in the United States, and to agree to produce books and papers before the Interstate Commission whenever required. For any violation of the Inter State Law, even in Canada, the license is to be suspended, and may be finally revoked. Of course, without the consent of their owners, the Canadian railways cannot be brought under the foreign jurisdiction of the Inter State Commerce Law; and Mr. Hitt's clients propose to use compulsion by denying to their trains the right to enter the Republic, unless they so consent. The Interstate Commerce Commission is to make regulations for Canadian railways the same as they do for American; in other words, our railway system, which connects with the United States, is to be placed absolutely at the mercy of a foreign jurisdiction. The alternative is that railway traffic is to be arrested at the frontier, and to be forbidden to start again on its way until it has been subjected to all the trouble and expense of a transfer. The whole question is reducible to the right to receive freight and passengers from foreign countries into the United States. The American connections of the Canadian railways, being on American soil, are American roads, and may fairly be subjected to American laws. The fact that they are owned by foreigners, when it is a fact, does not denationalize them. But if Mr. Hitt's clients could get their way, the foreign connections of these roads would be subjected to disabilities which would effect their ruin.

If this bill were to pass, the Interstate Commission would be empowered to make regulations to prevent preferences being given to foreign over United States ports; natural advantages, if they exist, would be nullified by artificial restrictions, and the United Stades producer would be sacrificed to the greed of the carrying interests. It is clearly the interest of the American producers to reach distant markets by the least expensive route, and if they were forbidden to do so they would be at a disadvantage as competitors in third markets.

The Inter State Commerce Law was passed chiefly to protect producers against railway discrimination. The railway companies have done their best to turn it into an instrument for their own aggrandizement. Free competition is stigmatized as "rate cutting" and made illegal. This happens under the law as it stands at present. And it is sought, by the Hitt Bill, to give the President power of suspending any part of the Inter State Law which the railway managers may be able to convince him is inimical to them. If the law is in any particular objectionable, as being against the public weal, the duty of amending or repealing it rests with Congress; to give the President a dispensing power would be an ill augury, and would give effect to an arbitrary principle such as was not borne patiently in England in the worst of times.

A direct attempt to discriminate against Canada is made in the following words: "All merchandise, manufactures, and products arriving at any port of the United States from Canada shall, for the purpose of valuation for the levy of duties, be treated as though the same originated in the country from which it immediately entered the United States." This means that the value of the goods for duty would be the Canadian value instead of the value in the country of their origin. Direct imports, say from Japan, would be subject to a different rule, and pay only on their value in Japan. The design is to kill Canadian competition in the carrying trade, and subject American consumers to such rates as favored native carriers might be able to charge.

The question raised by this extraordinary Bill will arouse the attention and the opposition of the Eastern and Western States. At least that has been the effect of similar attempts, which did not go nearly so far as this. It will not be the first time that the American railway managers have required to be curbed, and it is not likely to be the last.

AN INSOLVENCY ACT WANTED.

Is it not about time that the wholesale men and manufacturers of the Dominion should hear something from Ottawa about the intentions of the Government with respect to an insolvency act? Two years ago it was announced to delegates to the capital on this matter that the then Premier would take charge of an insolvency bill, but the late Mr. Abbott's health unfortunately did not permit. In November, 1892, a deputation from the Boards of Trade of five cities visited Ottawa on the same errand. Still more recently, in January of the present year, a deputation from the principal cities had conference at Ottawa with the Premier and Minister of Finance, at whose suggestion a committee of gentlemen from Quebec and Ontario was appointed with whom the Government might consult upon an insolvency measure. So far as we can learn this committee has never since been called on by the Government.

We now observe that the Dry Goods section of the Toronto Board of Trade, at its most recent meeting, again brought up the matter of an insolvency law. And we understand that a deputation from this body is to meet on Monday next with the general council of the Board to discuss this among other subjects. It would be a mistake for the Government to conclude that the anxiety of business men for some measure which shall afford creditors relief from shameful preferences, and which shall cure the troublesome lack of uniformity in the laws governing failed traders of various provinces, has in any degree subsided.

BILL OF LADING REFORM.

For a long time there has been a feeling in the minds of merchants that bills of lading have been drawn up too much in the interest of ship-owners. Clauses have been introduced into bills of lading which secured protection for the ship-owner against claims for loss and damage to which he might often fairly have been made liable as a common carrier. And the traders felt that this was unjust, and they have made their feelings known in such wise that, as we learn from the London *Economist*, the ship-owners are now disposed to accede to the demand for a modification of the conditions of bills of lading. Accordingly, at the conference of the Association for the Reform and Codification of the Law of Nations, held at the Guildhall last month, Mr. Glover, on behalf of the ship-owners, intimated that they were prepared to give way on two points. They would, he said, accept responsibility for the proper storage of cargo, and also under certain conditions liability for loss or damage from unseaworthiness, these conditions, after consultation with the Underwriters' Mutual Association, having been defined thus: "The ship-owner to be responsible for loss or damage resulting from the unseaworthiness of the vessel in sailing, but not for any