

HON. MR. POWER—He is in accord with me on that subject.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—Well, he is not in accord with most of the writers on the subject. If we were able deliberately to sit down and decide amongst ourselves here what goods it would be to our advantage to exchange with the United States free of duty we might make an arrangement such as that which has been suggested by the hon. member from Halifax, that we could look upon favorably, which would be of advantage to us, and probably of advantage to our neighbors also. We know that the last Reciprocity Treaty was an advantage both to ourselves and to our neighbors, but I do not conceive and I do not admit that to admit without exception every article grown or manufactured in the United States free of duty, in consideration only of our products, either of manufactures or naturally-grown objects, which is the restricted definition that my hon. friend now applies to unrestricted reciprocity, would be of advantage to us, because it would destroy the whole work we have been trying to do for the last ten years.

HON. MR. POWER—No, no.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—It would absolutely hurl on us the weight and power of the capital of the United States, of which everybody knows the enormous magnitude. It would come in competition with our comparatively feeble manufacturers; it would create for them the advantages of a slaughter ground, such as they made of our country before 1878, and we would naturally and necessarily fall into the position of hewers of wood and drawers of water for the United States. Our manufactures would become as extinct as they were before 1878, and they never could grow as they have grown since that time. Our infant industries would be allowed to tumble to the ground, never to rise again, and all that this country could do would be to cut its lumber and ship it, to denude its forests to make a living for the few people who would remain in it, and be satisfied with selling some of its coarse grains and natural products to the United States. Where would be the prospect of improvement under such a condition of affairs as that? I dare say, however, that

we shall have an opportunity of discussing this question in a way which will lead to some substantial conclusion, which this discussion cannot.

There are one or two minor points to which I will refer in a very cursory way. The hon. member from Ottawa, I think, was right in the view he expressed as to the difficulty of framing statutory bills of lading. I am afraid that would be a very difficult thing to do. A bill of lading must cover the exigencies and contingencies arising from innumerable different voyages, under innumerable different conditions of fact, in respect of which all bills of lading require to contain corresponding provisions. The idea has been entertained by the trade in the United States, and efforts have been made for the last five or six years by conventions and meetings and conferences to get up bills of lading that would be agreed upon as satisfactory contracts between the shipper and carrier, but I think I am right in saying that up to this moment these attempts have been entire failures, and I have no doubt their failure has been largely due to the fact that each bill of lading must be applicable to its own particular voyage and to the particular risks which will occur on that voyage. However, it is a subject of great importance, and it is desirable that the numerous conditions affixed to bills of lading should be restricted. At present they are restricted by law—at least, in my part of the country, which is remarkable for the equitable character of its law; and there a man is not allowed to contract himself out of the consequences of his own fault or negligence. That restriction, it seems to me, is likely largely to affect the conditions inserted in bills of lading. However, it is a subject which requires careful consideration, and if it were possible to agree upon certain principles regulating the conditions which should govern all contracts of that description there is no doubt there would be a great advantage in it.

I would like to say a word also as to the question of ocean navigation. Hon. gentlemen know what sacrifices the country has made to improve its internal communications. It has now the finest through road in the world across its entire breadth, and across the breadth of the entire continent. It is no doubt to the advantage