

and substantial claim made by Canada under the Convention of 1818. By that treaty United States fishermen were excluded from the purchase of provisions, bait, ice, seines, lines, and all other supplies and outfits; transshipment of catch, for transport by any means of conveyance, and shipping of crews, until and only when Congress abolished the duty on Canadian fish imported into the United States. If that convention, to which President Cleveland had given his assent, had been adopted by the Senate of the United States, American fishermen would still have been debarred from the privilege of transshipping their catch in bond through Canada, and from enjoying commercial rights in our ports. So that you will observe the inconsistency of Mr. Cleveland's course in first of all recommending to the Congress of the United States the adoption of this very treaty, which provided for the exclusion of American fishermen from the right of transshipping their catch, and then, when the Senate rejected that treaty, turning round upon Canada and menacing us with the threat of commercial non-intercourse because we declined to allow, in contravention of the Treaty of 1818, American fishermen to transship their catch to our country in bond. It must, I am sure, have been a matter of gratification to every member of this House, to observe the admirable temper in which that threat of retaliation was received by the people of Canada. The press of both parties, I think, almost without distinction, declared that the course of the Canadian Government was the right one, and that we should not, in the face of a threat, recede from the position we had assumed. There was, indeed, one voice—and I presume that during this Session the subject will be referred to—raised, if not in support of the position of the United States, at least in opposition to the course of Canada. I refer to the hon. member for Quebec (Mr. Laurier), who declared at St. Thomas, some two or three days after the retaliation message was sent down to Congress, that the policy of the Canadian Government was a vicious policy, that it was an unfriendly, injudicious and a harsh policy, and that it ought to be reversed. Why? Because it was said that Canada, in the enforcement of her interpretation of the Treaty of 1818, had pursued an illiberal, vicious course towards the United States; and yet, within a few days after that statement was made, President Cleveland sent down to Congress a message, in which he declared that since March 3rd, 1887—that is to say, through two whole fishing seasons—"No case has been reported to the Department of State wherein complaint has been made of unfriendly or unlawful treatment of American fishing vessels on the part of the Canadian authorities, in which reparation was not promptly and satisfactorily obtained by the United States." It seems to me that that statement affords sufficient answer to the contention that the course of Canada, in the enforcement of her rights under the Treaty of 1818, has been harsh and illiberal. What has been the course of Canada? She has pressed for the last thirty-five years for an arrangement with the United States which would suspend the operation of the Treaty of 1818 and supplant that by a new arrangement based upon mutual concession and mutual advantages. The Treaty of 1854 was concluded with that object in view, and so was the subsequent Treaty of 1871. Both treaties were terminated by the United States. The latest effort to settle the question has also been rejected by the United States; and if to-day the provisions of the treaty of seventy years ago are deemed oppressive, if to-day they are found to be harsh towards the United States fishermen and to operate to their injury and disadvantage, the fault rests, not with Ottawa, not with London, but with Washington and the Congress of the United States. There is, therefore, no other course now open to the Parliament of Canada than that of firmly maintaining the rights solemnly covenanted between the two countries in 1818; and I am in hopes that the incoming

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Administration in the United States, controlling both Houses, a Republican Administration, which, both in 1854 and 1871, concluded treaties that have been in force, will regard the position in another light than that in which they have regarded it during recent months, and will be able to devise such a basis of settlement as will be satisfactory to the two countries and promote those friendly relations we all desire should exist between them. Had that threat of retaliation been listened to, had the recommendation of President Cleveland been acceded to by the Congress of the United States, Canada would undoubtedly have suffered for a time more or less seriously; but I may point out this fact, that while the transit trade of Canada across the territory of the United States, in 1832 and 1883, averaged about \$66,000,000 annually, in 1886 and 1887 that trade had fallen to an average of only \$32,000,000, or to one-half, showing the growing independence of Canada with regard to her channels of communication with foreign countries. His Excellency, in the Speech from the Throne, has intimated that a measure will be introduced this Session for the purpose of amending, in some particulars, the Franchise Act. That Act has undoubtedly enlarged the electorate by broadening the basis of the suffrage, and has secured the advantage of practical uniformity the country over. The subject of the franchise has been debated more or less since 1885, in the press, on the platform, and on the floor of this House, and I think it is a fair interpretation of the discussions to say that the current of opinion has favored the principle of the Dominion law, and that the only objections advanced to the measure have had relation to the expense of the revision and preparation of the lists and the somewhat complex character of the law. The House has, therefore, I am sure, heard with pleasure the intention of the Government to simplify the law and lessen the cost of its operation. These reforms effected, there should be little to cavil at in the Franchise, for its character is already so liberal as virtually to confer the suffrage on every citizen who is not a confirmed pauper, who, in a word, has a stake in the country's progress and prosperity and is interested in the maintenance of law and order. But by far the most important subject alluded to in the Speech from the Throne is that in which we are promised measures looking to the improvement of the Atlantic mail service and to the establishment of steam communication between British Columbia and China and Japan. There can be no doubt of the importance of perfecting the chain of communication *via* Canada between England and the East, and of making the Canadian route the principal avenue of the inter and transcontinental trade. If there could be any cause for hesitation in the adoption of this policy, I imagine it would be based upon the consideration of the expense involved, because it is presumable that in the establishment of a line of steamships on the Pacific, and in the improvement of the Atlantic mail service, some additional expenditure will have to be made by Parliament; but I may recall to the House this fact, that, thirty-five years ago, the old Province of Canada thought the establishment of direct communication between Canada and Great Britain of so much consequence as to warrant the granting of a subsidy of no less than \$220,000 a year for that purpose; and it seems to me that the Dominion, with the immense development which has taken place in the past thirty-five years, with the vastly increased wealth and resources of the country, is quite well able to stand any expense which the establishment of this service may entail. As evidencing the improved financial condition of Canada in recent years, let me quote this fact, that between Confederation and 1879, in the first twelve years after 1867, of the total increase of \$67,200,000 in the debt of the country, every dollar but \$6,000,000 was obtained from London by means of loans, whereas in the last nine years of the total increase in the net debt of \$91,500,000, no less than \$43,200,-