

way. The technical term is "catching," I believe. That I suppose—indeed I know—to be the condition of the vessel.

*Mr. Mason.*—Mr. President, I saw, as did the whole American people, the fact announced of the recovery of this vessel, and her being brought successfully, and after much danger and peril, within our own waters. It occurred to me at the time, and I have been more strongly impressed with it in thinking over the subject since, that the proper disposition of that vessel would be for the Government of the United States to purchase her, and refit her in a proper manner, and send her back to England. She was the property of the English Government, and was one of their public ships, abandoned on an enterprise of discovery, in which we have largely participated with them, abandoned from necessity, and accidentally recovered by one of our merchant ships.

I had thought that that high national courtesy, which I am gratified to say marks our country certainly with as much distinction as any other in the great family of nations—that national courtesy which does more to preserve the peace of the world, even than armed ships themselves, would suggest that, on a suitable occasion, this ship should become the property of the Government, if it can be done on fair and equitable terms, and should be sent back to England, in the name of the American people. I would suggest, therefore, to the honourable Senator from Connecticut, learning that she has not changed hands, that, unless there be some immediate occasion for this resolution, it would be as well, perhaps, to let it lie over until we can confer on the subject.

*Mr. Foster.*—I am exceedingly gratified in the suggestion of the honourable Senator from Virginia. The same course of proceeding occurred to myself months ago, and I then made some inquiries of certain gentlemen in the Senate, older, more experienced, and more influential than myself, in regard to the probability of such a project as that being entertained favourably in this or the other House of Congress. I was not encouraged, as I am now, by the honourable Senator from Virginia; I was discouraged. From the inquiries which I made, I feared that any such effort on my part as that suggested (with so much liberality, and, I must say, with so much propriety) by the honourable Senator from Virginia, would not be likely to receive the sanction of a majority of this body. It seemed to me it would be exceedingly unadvised to bring forward such a proposition, and have it fail. It would certainly be a mark of great discourtesy to a foreign Power, if such a project as that should be named, and voted down. For fear this would be the result, I did not bring forward the measure; but coming as it does from the source from which it emanates, it seems to me we may now hope that there will be no difficulty, so far as this body is concerned, but that that measure will be entertained and favourably considered here.

I can assure the honourable Senator from Virginia, and the Senate, that the persons concerned in this vessel, from those who have the largest to those who have the smallest interest, down to the cabin boy on board, will, one and all, join heartily and cordially in disposing of it at a very low price, to the Government, in order that this project may be carried out.

I will now, with the leave of the Senate, withdraw the resolution, trusting and believing that the Senator from Virginia will take such steps in this matter as shall result in doing what I, for one, should be so gratified to do, and what I know those whom I represent are exceedingly anxious to have done. They will make almost any sacrifice on the vessel, for the sake of doing this just, courteous, and proper act, so properly suggested by the honourable Senator from Virginia.

*The President, pro tempore.*—The resolution will be withdrawn, if there is no objection.

*Mr. Mason.*—I wish to say to the honourable Senator from Connecticut, that I have consulted with nobody, and am not at all aware of what the dispositions or feeling of the Senate and House of Representatives may be on the subject. I confess that, in my own judgment, I have been strongly impressed with the propriety of the step which I have suggested, although I agree with the Senator that it would be an unfortunate suggestion, if it should meet with disfavour, far more if it should not have the vote of the Senate.

*Mr. Foster.*—The gentlemen with whom I conversed on the subject, one and all, expressed their entire willingness to vote for such a proposition themselves, but feared that others would vote differently. I did not meet discouragement so far as the action of those with whom I conferred was concerned, but the fear was, as to what others might do.