

necessary it was to our fishing and revenue property and rights, that this point should be adhered to with the utmost strictness. This practice and mode of enforcing the treaty was carried on without any complaint of right all the time from 1818 to 1854, the date of the Reciprocity treaty. I say complaint of right, sir, because it would happen now and then that the American Government would raise as to particular vessels seized, the question whether they were as a fact doing wrong; and our rights were never disputed by the United States. And I wish, sir, to state with peculiar emphasis that through all this period as the Reciprocity treaty of 1854 our seizures were invariably made without any notice whatever to offending vessels, and I say this, sir, because the President in his message insinuates that we seize now without notice, contrary to ancient practice. This is not the case, sir.

HERALD COMMISSIONER. — Touching the question of the headlands, sir, in this stage of the affair, before the Reciprocity treaty.

DOMINION STATESMAN. — That question was only raised a short time before the Reciprocity treaty by the United States. You will observe, sir, that by the language of the treaty of 1818 the United States renounced all rights of fishing access, not merely within three marine miles of the British coast alone, but also of the British bays, creeks or harbours. We conceived and still conceive that under that renunciation our exclusive line was determined by a line drawn from headland to headland of all bays of British coasts, and that American fishermen were not at liberty to approach for fish within three miles of such a line. We have the decisive authority of Daniel Webster himself that this construction is the right one. Under date of 6th July, 1852, the great American statesman complains that this large concession was made in 1818 to England of drawing line from headland to headland; but he does not venture to question that it was made—complains, on the contrary, that it was made. However, shortly before the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854 the American Government began to complain of this large measure of exclusion as regards such bodies of water as the Bays of Fundy and Chaleurs, and other large indentations of the British America coasts. Now, sir, I wish at this stage of our statements to draw your especial attention to this point, because it bears with such force on the question of our friendliness. Since the abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty in 1866, although as to this point of the headlands we conceive our rights to be indisputable, we have renounced their enforcement in practice. We now in practice

limit the exclusion of American fishermen to three miles from the actual coast line only, allowing them free fishing within all bays and harbors up to the three mile limit. Here is a point of great importance to American fishermen which we have quietly, for the sake of good neighborhood and kind feeling, practically given up our rights under the Treaty of 1818.

HERALD COMMISSIONER — Oblige me by continuing the history of the question.

DOMINION STATESMAN — Well, sir, the next stage in this eventful history was the period of the Reciprocity treaty. During the twelve years that the American Government allowed that treaty to be in force all these questions were in abeyance, for by its provisions American fishermen were placed on precisely the same footing as British fishermen; they could fish wherever they liked, all over the shores of British North America. We are at a loss to conceive, on grounds of statesmanship, why that treaty was ever denounced and repealed by the American Government. Canada got nothing under it at all equivalent to the unlimited fishing right of the citizens of the United States. Indeed that may be said to have been the very plum of the pudding in the Reciprocity Treaty, and if the Americans had kept it in their own hands all the questions now raised would have slept for ever.

HERALD COMMISSIONER — Then the stage of the affair after the repeal of the Reciprocity Treaty is a new one altogether?

DOMINION STATESMAN — Yes, sir: and we contend that our conduct as regards the fisheries since that date, so far from being chargeable with unfriendliness, has been conspicuously indulgent, neighborly and friendly to the United States. Indeed we go the length of saying that we have done everything except give up the property in our coast line fisheries altogether to American people. Nay, sir, we have even gone within an acre of even doing that altogether; for we have been willing and have attempted to give them the right of the inshore fishing on the payment of an almost nominal license fee. The American fishermen paid it at first, but afterwards declined, and left us no recourse but the enforcement of our rights.

HERALD COMMISSIONER — Oblige me and state the course of these transactions since the repeal of the Reciprocity Treaty.

DOMINION STATESMAN — With pleasure. You will observe that from the moment when that treaty was knocked in the head we were remitted to the exact position we held under the Treaty of 1818. The British Government desired that we should treat the matter, however, in a spirit of conciliation, and we have more than responded to that desire; we have, indeed, acted in