

the renewal of the treaty in its present form, while it does show that we have lost largely by it in revenue to the amount of a million of dollars annually, which has gone into the pockets of British fishermen who have given us no equivalent in return, but on the contrary, has served to build up and strengthen the fishing interest in the provinces and to weaken it in the states.

Upon this question of the fisheries it is proper to understand that our treaties with England have not given us in any one instance our full and just rights. England by her own doctrine promulgated to nullify the claims of the Pope, has really no exclusive rights beyond what she holds by actual possession, or what has been voluntarily conceded to her. The fisheries on the North American Coast were a source of profit to the maritime nations of Europe anterior to any attempt at settlement of the country. So far as they are property, they are joint property, and were so at first considered of all maritime nations, and the adjoining coast so far as needful, for drying and curing fish, was also considered joint property. The right to fish carried with it the right to the use of the adjoining coast for the purpose, that is to say, the right to a fair proportion of that coast, and these rights would still obtain but for compulsory surrenders at different times to the demands of England. Through fear of England's power, and because of the unpunished claims of that government, we have yielded in every treaty with her our just rights. It is proper in any future negotiations to understand fully the past, and it may not be improper to enquire how far compulsory concessions made in time of weakness are binding upon us. Mr. Adams in 1814 said that he would continue the war with England forever rather than give up the sea fisheries.

These fisheries are not only a source of profit to the country by adding to its wealth while they do not impoverish or weaken, but they are nurseries for seamen, and in this view, and in view of the demand humanity is making upon us, that we should become the great maritime power of the world, we must hold inflexibly all that justly belongs to us in connection with them. England claimed under the treaty of 1818, to