## QUEENSLAND PEARL FISHERIES.

The memorial to the Federal Council draws attention also to the Act of 1888, whereby *British* pearlers in extra-territorial waters west of Torres Straits are brought under the jurisdiction of Queensland, and compelled to take out licenses to fish. It so happens that no particular hardship is inflicted in practice at present by this Act, but the principle is bad, disregarding the comity of nations as regards territorial waters and discriminating against the British flag.

## CEYLON AND INDIAN PEARL FISHERIES.

Mr. Blaine refers to these, and argues that as England has been left in undisturbed enjoyment of them, so the United States should claim proprietary rights in the Behring Sea because British fishermen for many years had not taken part in fishery operations there. If, however, an American vessel made a raid on the Ceylon banks, which lie far beyond the three-mile limit, and that vessel were seized and taken into Colombo, would Mr. Blaine acquiesce? The Act of 1811 prohibiting fishing on these pearl banks cannot now be applied to foreigners, whatever Great Britain may have thought in 1811. That a stranger could embark in a new and special industry such as pearling, with success, is quite another matter, but the Australian pearling fleets are in a position to do so with a change of flag. The loss of a contribution to the Ceylon Treasury of some £50,000 every other year would be a brilliant sequel to Lord Knutsford's handling of the West Australian dispute; and yet such a possibility is already not much more than hull-down.

If, however, a *danger-depth* limit be added to the three-mile limit the historical pearl banks of Ceylon and India would be added to the territorial possessions and the care of those two countries, and yet leave slightly deeper ground as yet untouched for any enterprising stranger to try his skill and fortune upon.