

statements they have done those very things which they said would destroy the whole value of our inshore fisheries and, more than that, they have, as the Minister of Finance told us in so many words, performed this surrender and humiliation after first of all exasperating a very powerful neighbor, whom the Finance Minister tells us it is in the highest degree in our interest to conciliate and to keep on good terms. Sir, among other things the hon. gentleman gave us a very curious bit of secret history. It appears—and it was a very remarkable admission, although it was only fair on the part of the Minister of Finance to make it—that this famous visit of Easter, 1887, made to Mr. Bayard, did not originate from the Minister's own seeking. It appears there was a go-between, there was a third ambassador concerned; it appears that the Government of Canada and the Minister of Finance were indebted to the friendly intervention of Mr. Erastus Wiman for bringing the Secretary of State and the Minister of Finance together. Now, I am bound to say that I believe in so doing Mr. Wiman rendered this country a very valuable service. I have no doubt whatever from what has transpired that had not Mr. Wiman proposed and arranged that interview, had not the Finance Minister gone down to Washington or New York whichever it might be and interviewed Mr. Bayard, I have no doubt from the dangers which menaced Canada, from the dangerous complications that were ahead, a very perilous state of things might have ensued. I think it is only due to a man who has been much abused and much vilified by the hon. gentleman's colleagues, by his supporters and the press supporting those hon. gentlemen, that attention should be drawn here, and in the most public manner, to the service that Mr. Wiman rendered to his native country on that occasion, and I trust both the hon. gentleman and his colleagues and supporters and the press, now that the Minister of Finance has practically recognised this great service on the part of Mr. Wiman, will speak of that gentleman in future with the respect due to one who has rendered a very important service to his country. I believe myself the hon. Minister of Finance likewise rendered a valuable service in this, that although like his colleagues he had been misled into a very vicious policy, when he was brought face to face with the situation he then understood how critical it had become, and from that time he applied himself seriously and in earnest to extricate us from the dilemma in which we had been placed. I cannot but believe that the hon. gentleman in his heart of hearts had desired—and as I said I think there is no use in disguising the fact after what Mr. Bayard has said—that he at any rate informally acquiesced in the proposal which Mr. Bayard made to us, to close this difficulty on lines closely akin to unrestricted reciprocity. Sir, the hon. gentleman, in the course of his speech, made a very remarkable allusion indeed, and one to which I wish to call the special attention of this House, to the subject of commercial union. The hon. gentleman told us that he did not meet a man of any party among American statesmen who would not hold up both hands for commercial union with Canada, but he also told us that “the proposition of unrestricted reciprocity”—and mark those words—“of free trade with the United States, with the privilege to make our own tariff with the rest of the world,” he says, “I did not meet a man with an intelligent head on his shoulders who would talk about such a thing for a moment. Sir, they treated that proposition with scorn.” What was the proposition that those gentlemen treated with scorn, and what was it that the hon. gentleman had suggested to them as unrestricted reciprocity? The hon. gentleman continues: “They said: Do you suppose that we intend to make a free trade arrangement with Canada, to adopt free trade with England and to destroy the position, that we occupy in relation to all the vast industries of the country.” Sir, does the hon. gentleman suppose that

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any man on this side of the House, or any sane individual, would be idiotic enough to suppose that the Americans would consent at the present moment to enter into an arrangement with Canada which involved free trade with England and all the world. Does not the hon. gentleman know perfectly well that if that was the construction he placed on unrestricted reciprocity, if, as appears from the very words he has quoted, he gave those American statesmen to understand that unrestricted reciprocity with Canada meant free trade with England and practically therefore with all the rest of the world of course they would refuse it. Sir, that is not unrestricted reciprocity. We know very well, and I was at pains to make it manifest, that if we get unrestricted reciprocity with the United States we must discriminate in a great number of articles against the mother country. Sir, I say that the hon. gentleman has shown conclusively by this very passage that no American statesman, not one of all those he met on the other side, had said the least thing in opposition to such a scheme of unrestricted reciprocity as was proposed from this side of the House, or as any man here has supposed possible. What they declared, as appears from the hon. gentleman's own language in the clearest terms was, that they were not prepared for free trade with England, and consequently, as I have said, with the rest of the world. I am a little at a loss to understand how the hon. gentleman could have so misrepresented the case as it is apparent from his own words he did misrepresent it. He must have done this I think for the express purpose of getting a refusal, and of being able to tell the House that he offered unrestricted reciprocity and that all American statesmen had refused it. He must have desired to obtain that reply, or otherwise those men would never have replied to him as he states they have done. They did not reply: We cannot make a free trade arrangement with Canada; but they did say: We cannot make a free trade arrangement with Canada if that means that we must adopt free trade with England, for we cannot destroy the position we occupy in relation to the vast industries of this country. I have further to say that the speech of the Minister of Finance shows in the clearest possible manner the insincerity, to say the least of it, of the attacks that were made from that side of the House on the gentlemen on this side with respect to this question of unrestricted reciprocity. If it was so disloyal, if it was so unreasonable, and if it was so treasonable, how was it in the name of wonder that the hon. gentleman could have come to enter into these negotiations with Mr. Bayard, or to make a proposition which he himself says amounted to unrestricted reciprocity. Sir, the practical fact of the matter is that the Government has been at sea on this question, as it has been at sea on almost every other question connected with our relations with the United States. Apparently the Government of Canada have adopted this one guiding rule, and this one only, to brag and bluster and bully, and then when you are confronted with a determined foe haul down your flag. That appears to be the policy of the Government and nothing else. That was the policy pursued with the Province of Manitoba. Have we forgotten, Sir, how a year ago this House echoed with denunciations of the gentlemen on this side because they propose a course in accordance with right and justice to Manitoba. Sir, the concession was not made in answer to remonstrances, the concession was made in answer to threats, and not until those threats had assumed the most formidable proportions did hon. gentlemen relax their tyrannical interference with the rights of our sister Province. So, Sir, has it been in the case with those fisheries. There was bully, and bluster, and brag, and various vexatious customs relations, which irritated and exasperated the Americans, as my hon. friend told us, and then, Sir, when they are brought face to face with the results of their own conduct, and when they found there was serious peril, they