

the policy, the very necessities of the measure obliged them to reject such a measure so far as concerns agricultural products. The civil war had entailed upon them burthens of the most serious character—it obliged them to impose heavy taxation, internal and external, many articles produced in the country itself were specifically taxed; and it was scarcely to be expected that whilst this was the case, they would allow Canadian products free into their own country. In 1866 the Reciprocity Treaty was repealed; under it the Americans had about the same rights as we are now asked to give them. We gave them the right to fish just as freely as they will have it from this time forward. Then the Treaty having been repealed we asserted our own sovereign rights to the fishing grounds, by requiring the people of the United States to pay a license for fishing, but we charged them a merely nominal rate. The question that presented itself to my mind was whether it was desirable to continue to exclude the productions of the fisheries from free markets in the United States, because we could not also obtain admission for our agricultural products into the United States. We were bound to accept reciprocity as far as possible, and the Treaty gives it as respects the Fisheries. I consider the admission of fish goes very far towards an equivalent for the right given to the Americans to fish in our waters. The Treaty goes still further, for it provides if the interchange of fishing privileges is not sufficient, then there is an arbitration to settle the difference between the respective concessions. I am enough of a free trader to take as much free trade as I can to begin with, and I believe we can best attain more perfect reciprocity by establishing an amicable state of relations with the United States. I believe that the continuance of our prosperity depends in a great measure on the amicable relations we have with our neighbors. Any one acquainted with the trade of the country will admit that the moment there was an apprehension that the Geneva Conference would break up confidence in the stability of our prosperity was disturbed. I would not make undue or unreasonable sacrifices when our national rights are in question, but I am quite certain that the Parent State would not ask us to ratify this Treaty were she not convinced that it is consistent with her honor and the advancement of our best interests. Numerically we are not the equals of our neighbors, we are 4,000,000 against 40,000,000; but at the same time we have our national rights, and I would be

the first to assert them when there is a necessity. I believe there is a sufficient sense of justice throughout the world to assist us in the assertion of our just rights in the time of our need. We must remember that the fishery stipulations are only to last for twelve years. We gave the Americans the right to fish on the payment of a small license fee, and there was at last great difficulty found in collecting it. Nevertheless we allowed them to fish in our waters without any return whatever for a number of years, because we hoped they would grant Reciprocity; but now we obtain admission for our fish, and the privilege (whatever it may be worth) of fishing in their own waters. It is true we receive no extraordinary advantages under the Treaty, but still we are benefitted to a moderate extent. The Mother Country has made sacrifices, she has consented to pay for the depredations caused by the Alabama as the Conference may decide. I think that is perfectly right. I have been always of opinion that the escape of the Alabama was a national mistake. No reasonable man can deny that our interests in preserving peace on this continent is greater than theirs. We must remember too that the whole question has been left to the decision of this Parliament—the first time we have had such a privilege conceded to us. If the interests of the people were sacrificed, Parliament could reject the measure, but we have had already elsewhere sufficient evidence of the feeling on this point. With respect to the St. Lawrence, a great deal has been said about the surrender of sovereignty—one would imagine that the very liberties of this country had been sacrificed, and yet all we give up to the United States is the right to navigate a small portion of the river which is actually unnavigable. The rapids there compel vessels to make use of the canals which continue exclusively under the control of Canada. It has been said by my hon. friend from Grandville, that if we give the Americans the right of navigating the St. Lawrence, we concede the canals. Now the fact is the navigation of the canals is reserved to us, for the Treaty says expressly—Article 27. "The Government of Her Britannic Majesty engages to urge upon the Government of the Dominion of Canada to secure to the citizens of the United States the use of the Welland, St. Lawrence, and other canals in the Dominion." What has been the policy of the country with respect to the Canals? To open them to the trade of the United States on the same terms enjoyed by our own people. These