

“open to us. Looking at the question irrespective of the question of legal right, these acts of the Canadian Government are annoying acts, and unfriendly acts. Suppose, for a moment, that they are in the right; then, if they are taking advantage of their legal rights only, their acts are unfriendly and unneighbourly. If an individual, who is your neighbour, and whose farm and premises adjoin your house, and if, on the extreme verge of his land he builds a high fence, shutting out the light from your window, he may have a right to do it, and if he did it for the purpose of obscuring your light, what would you do with him? You cannot sue him. What is your remedy? Why, you would consider him to be a bad neighbour, and you would have no further intercourse with him.

“So with Great Britain. This is not an act of war on her part unless she chooses to make it so; and if she does, why, then, so be it. Let us say to her, we will have non-intercourse so long as the Alabama claims are unsettled. We can afford to wait, and she will be the loser. I have given you this sketch of the latter. It is a matter of very grave moment to us and to the country at large; but let me assure you that the Administration is doing everything that it can to settle the matter.”

---

WASHINGTON “DAILY REPUBLICAN,” 21ST OCTOBER, 1870.

“BEN. BUTLER ON THE WAR PATH.

“Ben. Butler is sure to be a member of the next House. As announced in our despatches yesterday, he has been nominated once more without opposition, he has made his opening speech, declaring his new platform, and he has struck a key which has found a hearty response among his constituents. He has done everything with a skill and forethought which seem to leave no doubt of his triumphant success.

“It was getting stupidly dull down in Butler’s district, and the great master of artful dodging found it necessary to do something that would stir up his constituents. To use a term familiar to newspaper men, he went into the sensation business. Finance and tariff, reconstruction and African emancipation were worn out in this district, so Ben. jumped right into the fishery business, and by two or three magnificent twists and turns of his oratorical wand transformed his apathetic supporters into most enthusiastic and excited admirers and listeners.

“We publish in another column that part of Ben. Butler’s last speech which bears on the fisheries question. It is interesting, spicy, bold and original, like the man himself. It is unscrupulous, too, like the great Butler, for he hesitates not to counsel his constituents to take the law into their own hands, and precipitate a war between the United States and the Dominion. This is all about a few fish, which Ben says his constituents have a right to catch within the bays of the British Provinces outside of three miles from the provincial shores. The Salem fishermen believe they have this right, and they seem to be sound in their faith. At all events, until very lately they enjoyed the right in common with the “Kanucks” unmolested.

“The Dominion authorities in excluding our citizens undoubtedly have shown a very unfriendly disposition, whether they are strictly in the right or not. It is not the style of conduct that close neighbours should practise. But, at the same time, is it worth while to make this a *casus belli*? Is Mr. Butler, who is influenced in his present course solely by a desire to ensure his own election at any cost, to be allowed to embroil us with Great Britain about this petty fishery question, which, after all, may be settled very quietly, and to the entire satisfaction of the Salem folks?

“If we are not very much mistaken, negotiations are now in progress looking to an amicable arrangement. Secretary Fish and Minister Thornton have been considering the question calmly and dispassionately, without any political purposes to serve, and we are of the opinion that it may be left to them without endangering American honour or Massachusetts interests.

“How comes it that Mr. Butler is so particularly fierce at this particular time, when his election is so close? Why didn’t he stir the thing up with *vim* some time ago, when there was just as much cause for complaint as now?

“We hope Mr. Butler will be sent back here in triumph to enliven the weary debates of Congress by his original bellicose and irrepressible eloquence, but we don’t want the luxury at the cost of a tussle by land and sea with old England. It is our opinion, and we believe the bulk of Americans concur, that if we can’t afford to enforce our bill of damages in the Alabama claims matter, certainly we ought not to square off at Great Britain about a few boat loads of fish.”

---