

their views as to the course to be pursued in consequence of the approaching termination of the fishery articles of the Treaty of Washington."

The hon. gentleman thought it derogatory to the dignity of the Government, of which he is the principal member, to do anything to approach the American Government on this matter. Lords Derby and Granville did not hold that view, and they were, no doubt, as desirous of protecting the dignity and self-respect of the Empire as is the hon. gentleman opposite of saving the dignity and self-respect of Canada. What reason does the hon. gentleman give to the House for surrendering the valuable fishing privileges? One is that, so soon as the elections were over, we opened negotiations with our American friends, and on two grounds we gave up our fisheries. One was in order to be good neighbors. If that is a reason, it will apply to next year as well as this: the same motive will exist to prompt us to do it again, and that extends not for the year past, but for the years to come. The second reason was a still more flimsy one, namely, that the American fishermen did not know that the treaty was then about to expire. The hon. gentleman cannot but be aware that it was thoroughly made known by the newspaper press of both countries, when the American Government determined to put an end to that treaty, and a circular was sent by the American Government to each of the firms in the fishing business, telling them that the treaty would expire on a certain date, and that for the future they would have no rights in regard to Canadian fisheries. They were aware of the fact. The reason given by hon. gentlemen opposite for surrendering our rights and fisheries and half ruining the fishing industry are of the most flimsy character. How can the hon. gentleman reconcile his concluding remarks with the opening portion of his speech? The hon. gentleman wound up by expressing the sanguine hope that the Morrison Bill would yet become law. If the temper of the Senate and Congress is such that they are willing, without solicitation, to pass a measure that will give us free trade with them, what could we not have done with them if they had been approached? Does the hon. gentleman maintain that they would do it much more willingly without solicitation or compensation than with solicitation and concession by us? The idea is preposterous. If the hon. gentleman's belief that the Morrison Bill will pass is a well-founded belief, then the temper of Congress is such as to condemn the Canadian Government for not having opened negotiations before and obtaining the advantages desired, I would not have ventured to address the House on this subject, except from the immense importance attached to the subject by the people I represent and by all the people of the Maritime Provinces, and I venture the assertion that the action of the Government will not be approved, but will be censured when their conduct is properly brought before the people.

Mr. MITCHELL. I shall not occupy the attention of the House more than two or three minutes; but as the two great leaders have addressed the House, I feel it my duty as representing the Independent centre to give expression to my views on two or three points referred to in the Speech from the Throne. I shall first touch on the question of Imperial federation. I have listened to the debates on the subject, and I know I have read various speeches made, and upon which comments have been made, emanating from the right hon. Premier of Canada; and I want to say right here, that I think it is a matter of very great regret that a gentleman occupying the position of Premier of this country should have given countenance to the utterances of opinions, in England, calculated to raise expectations both abroad and at home, which, in my humble opinion, never can be realised. I may be mistaken. It may be that the right hon. gentleman and those who sympathise with the view of Imperial federation may be able to propound a scheme

which may be acceptable to the people of this country. But I for one cannot give my assent to any scheme which would take away from the people of Canada any portion of the right of self-government; and without danger of doing so I cannot see that they can propound any scheme which will be acceptable to the people of England or that English statesmen will give us additional protection or additional rights and privileges unless we give up a certain portion of our rights and privileges. That I presume would involve among other things the renunciation of the right of taxation—a thing which this country never would submit to. Speaking as one who is independent of both parties in this House, I for one never will consent to any such scheme as would lessen in the slightest degree our rights and privileges, our self-government, or the control over our policy and revenues which we now possess. Another question which has been mentioned is one of a domestic nature, and one which concerns the people I have the honor to represent. A good deal has been said about the National Policy. I have been an advocate of the National Policy; I am an advocate of it, and I believe in it. I believe it has built up manufactures, that it has given employment to people in this country, and has retained, within our boundaries, those who without it would have been driven to seek homes and employment abroad. But there are features of the National Policy that are being run into the ground. There are certain manufactures which have received and are receiving protection far beyond what they ought to have. Take for example the case of cottons with 35 per cent.; everybody knows that is far beyond what they should receive, and that the money is taken out of the pockets of the people.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. MITCHELL. Hon. gentlemen opposite say "hear, hear," and they have the right to say "hear, hear," to the extent of about 10 per cent. I would protect the cotton factories just sufficient to enable them to compete with the productions of other countries, but I think the excessive protection which, under the general system of the National Policy, they are enabled to enjoy with regard to the cotton of this country, is unnecessary, and that it certainly bears hardly upon the poor people of Canada. The article of sugar is much in the same position, but without dwelling upon it I will come down to what is of more importance than either of them, and that is the breadstuffs of the country. I think the time has arrived when the duty should be taken off flour and cornmeal—the food of the poor. This duty was looked upon as a necessity, to hold the Ontario farmers as an offset to Nova Scotia coal. I am in favor of taking the duty off coal and off flour and cornmeal as well. I will not now enter into discussion of the subject, but I wish to say a few words in relation to the fisheries. It has been stated by the Premier that the Government have pursued the course which was just and right in relation to that question. I beg with all due respect to differ from my right hon. friend on that point. Many gentlemen will recollect that when the then Minister of Marine and Fisheries, now the Finance Minister, brought in a Bill, I think the Session before last, for the division of the Department, when the matter was discussed a whole night, I stated my views as to what was the duty of the Government in such a crisis as then existed. We received notice that the fishery clauses were to be terminated. The Government were not taken by surprise. The subject was one with which this Government had a right to deal. And upon that occasion it will be recollected by some hon. gentlemen that I now have in my eye, that after dealing with the question of the division of the Department, it being late at night, I suggested it was too late to go on with the discussion, though I should have liked to say something about the right and proper course to be pursued in reference to the fishery question. I was asked by