

"Against this treatment I make instant and formal protest as an unwarranted interpretation and application of the treaty by the officers of the Dominion of Canada and of the Province of Nova Scotia, as an infraction of the laws of commercial and maritime intercourse existing between the two countries, and as a violation of hospitality, and for any loss or injury resulting therefrom, the Government of Her Britannic Majesty will be held liable."

With reference to the prohibition of purchasing herring from Canadian weirs for canning, Mr. Bayard writes:

"Such inhibition of usual and legitimate commercial contracts and intercourse is assuredly without warrant of law, and I draw your attention to it in order that the commercial rights of the citizens of the United States may not be thus invaded and subjected thus to unfriendly discrimination."

The Secretary of the Treasury was asked to report upon these subjects, and he speaks of "the unworthy and petty spite" of the Canadians in dealing with the Americans. He also said:

"The Dominion of Canada brutally excludes American fishermen from Canadian ports. * * * I believe there never has been in the past and I hope there never will be in the future such passionate spite displayed by the officers of the Government, as has during the last summer been exhibited in the Dominion of Canada towards well meaning American fishermen."

That was from the Secretary of the Treasury. Then the Committee of Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives made a report, and they reported in much the same line. They also suggest the motives of the Canadians to use these means in enforcing what they considered their rights:

"The motives and purpose of such denial have been openly proclaimed by Canada, and plainly avowed by Canada to be first, the punishment of such vessels because the United States levies a duty on Canadian fish not fresh for immediate consumption, such as the Government levies on all such fish not the product of American fisheries and imported from any foreign place whatever, and secondly, to coerce the United States to exempt such Canadian fish from all customs duties, and to enter into other new reciprocal relations with the Canadian Dominion and Newfoundland. It is a policy of threat and coercion, which, in the opinion of your commission, should be instantly and summarily dealt with."

It was instantly and summarily dealt with and they showed in that report what it was they dealt with. It was this conduct of the Custom Department, which the hon. gentleman has said to-night was right, that they dealt with. Then came the retaliation Act. What language is used about that Act in the official correspondence brought down by the Government?

"The Senate rose to a high level of patriotism in defence of national honor. The series of unneighborly, brutal, and illegal outrages upon American commerce in Dominion waters has been resented with becoming vigor and dignity. The Senate, with only one dissenting vote—and that vote cast under a fantastic interpretation of the measure has armed the President with full, adequate and just powers of retaliation."

So I have traced, I think, that Retaliation Bill and all the possible and fearful consequences which it might have involved, directly and clearly to this indiscreet, ill-advised and unstatesmanlike action of our Government in 1886. Well, even after that our Government were not dismayed. No, Sir, like ancient Pistol they had brave words at any rate, and it was after that, it was on the 1st February, 1887, that we had the famous report of the Privy Council, which was sent over to England, and which purports to be the report of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries. I do not know whether I have any right to pry into the authorship or not of that document; but I should judge from the terms of it, and from the turns of sentences in that document, that the Minister of Justice had more to do with it than the Minister of Marine and Fisheries. The hands are the hands of Esau, but the voice is the voice of Jacob. In that grave State paper, they justify everything they have done, and they say:

"It is not to be expected that, after having earnestly insisted upon the necessity of a strict maintenance of these treaty rights, and upon the respect due by foreign vessels while in Canadian waters, to the municipal legislation by which all vessels resorting to those waters are governed, in the absence moreover of any decision of a legal tribunal,

to show that there has been any straining of the law in those cases in which it has been put in operation, the Canadian Government will suddenly and without the justification supplied by any new facts or arguments withdraw from a position taken up deliberately, and by doing so in effect, plead guilty to the whole of the charges of oppression, inhumanity, and bad faith, which, in language wholly unwarranted by the circumstances of the case, have been made against it by the public men of the United States."

Here is the historic sentence, which comes in now,—

"Such a surrender on the part of Canada would involve the abandonment of a valuable portion of the national inheritance of the Canadian people, who would certainly visit with just reprobation those who were guilty of so serious a neglect of the trust committed to their charge."

These were brave words indeed, but they were sent home by His Excellency on the 1st February, in a despatch to the Home Office, and as soon as the Home Government had time to consider the situation, they promptly sat upon Her Majesty's Government here, and in a despatch sent by cable from the Colonial Secretary to the Governor General, they say:

"Her Majesty's Government, while endeavoring to procure this *ad interim* arrangement, feel it right to intimate to you that they are disposed to think, after much consideration of the entire subject, that the best and simplest settlement of the present difficulties might be arrived at if both parties would agree so as to permit the discussion of the more extended commercial arrangements—to provide for a term at least, if not permanently, the condition of things which existed under the Treaty of Washington, fish and fish productions being again reciprocally duty free, and the fishery being once more reciprocally thrown open. They are, however, of opinion that it would be the clear interest of the Dominion that no suggestion of a pecuniary indemnification should be made in proffering this arrangement."

And that was within two days accepted by the Governor General in a cable to England, so that the high words, and the still more high-handed proceedings of the hon. gentleman could not be tolerated in England, but, fortunately for Canada in that instance, were interfered with. I am not so much surprised that England could not, after that, trust Canada to negotiate a treaty. These gentlemen nearly got Canada, nearly got England, and nearly got the Empire into a war with the United States. It was, therefore, not surprising that England could not trust the Canadian Government to negotiate the treaty. But, though that is the case, I would not like to be in the House when any Canadian commercial treaty is adopted which has been made for us by representatives of Downing Street, without entering a protest against that, because I think British diplomacy in colonial matters has always been a failure. We had hoped that we had outlived that stage of Canadian existence ever since, in 1874, Mr. George Brown went to Washington as a delegate, not from Downing Street, but from Ottawa, to negotiate a treaty. Of course he was authorised in Her Majesty's name, as he had to be. Afterwards, we settled in Halifax the amount of the claims against the United States, and we did it most successfully, without any Downing Street agent to manage it for us, and I had hoped that the ground which was taken, in 1862, by Mr. Blake in regard to that matter, and which, I think, you, Mr. Speaker, will recollect, would have been followed for the future. I think it is unnecessary, in order that Canada may have fair play with the United States, to invoke the warlike power of Great Britain. That is all a piece of clap-trap. We know that the English Government will not send its ironclads and open fire upon the cities of the United States in our behalf. England might do that in Alexandria or in Burmah, but she will not do it in regard to the United States. That is the last thing she will think of in this world. But we have claims of our own, and we should go to the United States and say to them: It is worth your while to make a treaty with us at any time, because it will be immensely to your advantage to make that treaty, and not only to make it but to keep it. It is not the ironclads or the armies of Europe that keep treaties in the present age, but it is the mutual benefits derived from them