

season the Government of that island refused to allow Nova Scotian vessels to procure bait or ice in Newfoundland ports, and the consequence was that several vessels which had gone down there from Nova Scotia were obliged to return, and were unable to prosecute their voyages. I am not objecting to the clause at all, but it brings up a subject which is of interest to the country, and I should like to know if the Government has any information that the Newfoundland authorities have altered their attitude since that time.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—I am unable to say, any more than my hon. friend, exactly what is the position occupied by Newfoundland in the matter at this moment. Hon. gentlemen all know that there has been a certain amount of friction about the proposed reciprocity between Newfoundland and the United States; but with reference to this clause, it is the same clause as the clause in the Bill of last year. Of course, the Government throughout have acted in concert with Newfoundland, and this clause enables that concert to be continued in case any friction which may exist may be removed.

HON. MR. SCOTT—The hon. gentleman says he does not know that any cause for friction has existed between Newfoundland and Canada.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—I did not say so. I did not say I did not know of any reason for any friction; I said I did not know the precise position of the difficulty which existed between Canada and Newfoundland at this moment.

HON. MR. SCOTT—It has been very generally discussed in the papers that Newfoundland, an independent colony, discovered that the proud Dominion of Canada was interfering to prevent the effecting of a treaty between Newfoundland and the United States, which was just on the eve of being concluded when Canada stepped in and thwarted the efforts of that colony. Newfoundland naturally revolted at the idea of Canada's interference, and the Government of that colony, taking a position which I admire, and which I think was consistent with the independent position which she has occupied, declared that the fishing rights which had been

extended to Canadian vessels should no longer exist. In doing so she took the right course—a weak colony hitting back against a strong one. I did think at the time when I heard of the action that the Government of Canada had taken—to wire across the Atlantic to the Colonial Secretary to stop the treaty which was being consummated between the two countries, because that treaty would give Newfoundland some advantages that Canada would be deprived of, so that supplies and bait could be obtained by the Americans on the Newfoundland shore—when the Government took that position, which, I think, was exceedingly unworthy of a great country like Canada. Newfoundland very properly became indignant, and very properly, as I would have done, had I been a Newfoundlander, said that this action of Canada was unfair and unjust. “We shall assert our rights as an independent colony, and we will declare that Canadian vessels shall not be entitled to the privileges that have been hitherto extended to them.” That was a very proper course for Newfoundland to take. It was absurd that a big country like this should step in and interfere with a treaty that an independent colony was making, simply because we were going to be put at a slight disadvantage by it. Our disadvantage is due entirely to ourselves, due to the policy of the Canadian Government, because they have been pretending from time to time to make a treaty with the United States, for it is all pretence. My hon. friend from Halifax, a few moments ago, asked if the leader of the Government in this House could not give some explanation of what they proposed to do at Washington next October. The simple answer was: “We have not the remotest idea what they are going to do; we have no policy prepared for the meeting at Washington. We went down to Washington to know what the Americans were willing to do, but they disclosed nothing and we disclosed nothing. They said, in a general way, we are willing to have reciprocity in the natural products, and to a certain degree in manufactured articles, but what those are have never been disclosed, nor do the Government know themselves.” The honest way for the Government is to say so. They know at the same time that the limited treaty they propose is not one that the Government of the United States