

To obviate this inconvenience and obstruction to prompt and well-defined settlement, it was considered advisable that the negotiations should be conducted in this city, and that the interests of Canada and Newfoundland should be directly represented therein.

The terms of reference having been duly agreed upon between the two Governments, and the conference arranged to be held here, by virtue of the power in me vested by the Constitution, I duly authorized Thomas F. Bayard, the Secretary of State of the United States, William L. Putnam, a citizen of the State of Maine, and James B. Angell, a citizen of the State of Michigan, for and in the name of the United States, to meet and confer with the plenipotentiaries representing the Government of Her Britannic Majesty, for the purpose of considering and adjusting in a friendly spirit all or any questions relating to rights of fishery in the seas adjacent to British North America and Newfoundland which were in dispute between the Governments of the United States, and that of Her Britannic Majesty, and jointly and severally to conclude and sign any treaty or treaties touching the premises; and I herewith transmit for your information full copies of the power so given by me.

In execution of the powers so conveyed, the said Thomas F. Bayard, William L. Putnam, and James B. Angell, in the month of November last, met in this city the plenipotentiaries of Her Britannic Majesty, and proceeded in the negotiation of a treaty as above authorized. After many conferences and protracted efforts an agreement has at length been arrived at, which is embodied in the treaty which I now lay before you.

The treaty meets my approval, because I believe that it supplies a satisfactory, practical, and final adjustment, upon a basis honorable and just to both parties, of the difficult and vexed question to which it relates.

A review of the history of this question will show that all former attempts to arrive at a common interpretation, satisfactory to both parties, of the first article of the treaty of October 20, 1818, have been unsuccessful; and with the lapse of time the difficulty and obscurity have only increased.

The negotiations in 1854, and again in 1871, ended in both cases in temporary reciprocal arrangements of the tariffs of Canada and Newfoundland and of the United States, and the payment of a money award by the United States, under which the real questions in difference remained unsettled, in abeyance, and ready to present themselves anew just as soon as the conventional arrangements were abrogated.

The situation, therefore, remained unimproved by the results of the treaty of 1871, and a grave condition of affairs, presenting almost identically the same features and causes of complaint by the United States against Canadian action and British default in its correction, confronted us in May, 1886, and has continued until the present time.

The greater part of the correspondence which has taken place between the two Governments has heretofore been communicated to Congress, and at as early a day as possible I shall transmit the remaining portion to this date, accompanying it with the joint protocols of the conferences which resulted in the conclusion of the treaty now submitted to you.

You will thus be fully possessed of the record and history of the case since the termination, on June 30, 1885, of the fishery articles of the Treaty of Washington of 1871, whereby we were relegated to the provisions of the treaty of October 20, 1818.