

Quebec, Ontario or Manitoba. Our natural markets and our only markets, are those of the United States and of foreign countries, and it is delusive in the extreme, and calculated to mislead the House, to make statements of that kind, which are not based upon facts. Now, I wish for a moment to refer to a remark which fell from the leader of the Government. He referred to the several occasions upon which the members on this side of the House have deemed it their duty to bring to the notice of the House, and of the country, the grave and serious importance of re-opening negotiations with the United States upon the question of reciprocity. He stated that there was a depth of degradation involved in our proposal to negotiate with the United States to which he, for one, would never consent to be a party, and which he believed the people, if appealed to, would condemn. Sir, I would like to ask the hon. gentleman whether he has not already found a depth of degradation greater than the one he suggests. I would like to ask him whether it was a greater depth of degradation to open negotiations with a friendly Government to see whether we could not settle upon a friendly basis the international relations between the two Governments relating to trade, and whether that was more degrading than the course he thought fit to pursue since this House met last year. Sir, when the House met last year, the first proposal which emanated from the Government was one to vote fifty thousand dollars of the people's money to protect our fisheries. The grounds upon which that proposal was made were these: That the treaty was about to expire, and that the vast fishing ground surrounding our coast would be thrown open to the enterprise of American fishermen, who, fishing side by side with our fishermen, would catch fish and take them to the only market open to them; and while our men would be handicapped with the enormous duty of two dollars per barrel, their fish would go in duty free, and that, as a consequence our fisheries would be destroyed. The hon. gentleman said, and his proposal met with no small degree of approval on both sides, that in view of these circumstances, and not having obtained a renewal of the fishery treaty, it was desirable and necessary that we should protect our fisheries. He talked in grandiloquent terms of the manner in which we were going to drive out the Yankees and keep our preserves for our own men. But no sooner had the House adjourned, than the hopes held out to the fishermen that their rights would be protected, were speedily dissipated. The hon. gentleman had hied off to Washington and proposed, not that there should be any fair exchange of our fisheries for some trade concessions they would give us, but that they should come into our waters and fish for nothing. And what has been the consequences of his policy? The hon. gentleman knows well that last year he voluntarily proposed that the whole of the waters surrounding these coasts should be given up to the American fishermen, whenever and wherever they liked, without restriction and without license, without anybody to interfere with them. And he knows well that he did that in face of the fact that, our fishermen, taking the same fish, in the same waters, when they took them to the only market open to them in the world, would be met with that two dollars a barrel duty. The hon. gentleman may know, and if he does not, some of his followers behind him may tell him, that he has succeeded in ruining a large number of men and nearly succeeded in destroying the enormous money interest invested in that fishery. If he goes down to the Maritime Provinces and converses with the people there, he will find whether they think it will be an act of degradation on the part of the Government to endeavor to negotiate reasonable, fair and legitimate terms upon which he would admit American fishermen into our waters, instead of surrendering every right and every privilege we possess to these people, for nothing.

Mr. DAVIES,

It has a double effect. It has a damaging effect, which goes further than the temporary loss of the money; and that effect is this: We have led the Americans to believe that we place no value on those rights, and it is now sounded throughout the length and breadth of the United States that the Canadian Government do not value those fisheries, and will not spend a dollar on their protection; and the men who went there last summer, who took their boats and schooners into our waters, and fished without restraint, and without having anything more than temporary permission, have learnt "the trick" with respect to the fishing, and much greater difficulty will be experienced next year than would have been experienced if the Government had instituted at once proper restraints, and adopted forcible means to keep them out. The hon. gentleman has said that our proposal involves degradation on the part of Canada. I have never been able to see what degradation there was in a free and independent people applying through their Government to an adjoining people, and asking them whether certain differences existing could not be settled by mutual agreement, whether the trade relations between the two countries could not be improved by mutual concessions. Did Lord Derby, when he penned his despatch inviting the attention of this Government to the state of facts which would follow the abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty, think it would be derogatory to our interests, or that it was derogatory to the Ministry of which he was one of the most prominent members, to take the step suggested? No. Look at the despatch which Lord Granville, sent in March, 1883, and you will find that the Imperial Government recognised and realised the importance of the question to be such, that no sooner had they received notice from the United States Government of their intention to abrogate that treaty than they at once called the attention of the Canadian Government to it, and invited their serious consideration to the important state of facts that would arise when the treaty expired. Lord Granville invited their immediate attention to the matter, and asked them further to give expression to their views, so that the Home Government might take action. Lord Granville waited for three months, and not having received any intimation from the hon. gentleman, he followed it up with a second despatch. It was dated in May. In that despatch he urgently requested that the Canadian Government would begin to appreciate the importance of those questions, important not only from a Canadian standpoint, but when the headlands question came into consideration, also from an Imperial standpoint, and he urged the hon. gentleman again and again to take the matter up, and put the Home Government in possession of their views, if they had any. But the hon. gentleman and his Government have been content to sail along without doing anything or having any policy, and I charge him with having sacrificed the interests of the fishermen of the Maritime Provinces by his negligence and supineness in this matter. What did Lord Granville say when he enclosed the notice received from the United States Government? He said:

"I am to request that in laying this paper before the Earl of Derby, you will state that although, after notice is given, two years must still elapse before these articles cease to have effect it appears to Lord Granville expedient to take into consideration, without delay, what course it will be best to adopt with the view, if possible, to avoid a recurrence of irritating disputes in connection with the fishery question, and I am to suggest that in the first place it might be well to communicate a copy of Mr. Lowell's note to the Canadian Government, and to ascertain what views they entertain upon the subject."

He got no answer to that. No course had been decided by the Cabinet then, and at the end of a year we find the Imperial Government sending another despatch to the Canadian Government asking them to do something. It was dated January, 1884, and it says:

"My Lord,—With respect to my despatches of the 3rd May, and 28th December, last, I have the honor to request that you will move your Government to take an early opportunity of placing me in possession of