

MR. BAYARD'S REPLY:—

"While continuing their proposal heretofore submitted—on the 30th ult.—and fully sharing the desire of Her Britannic Majesty's plenipotentiaries to remove all causes of difference in connection with the fisheries, the American plenipotentiaries are constrained, after careful consideration, to decline to ask from the President authority requisite to consider the proposal, conveyed to them on the 3rd inst., as a means to the desired end; because the greater freedom of commercial intercourse so proposed would necessitate an adjustment of the present tariff of the United States by Congressional action, which adjustment the American plenipotentiaries consider to be manifestly impracticable of accomplishment through the medium of a treaty under the circumstances now existing.

"Nor could the American plenipotentiaries admit that such a mutual arrangement as is proposed by Her Britannic Majesty's plenipotentiaries could be accepted as constituting a suitable basis of negotiations concerning the rights and privileges claimed for American fishing vessels. It still appears to the American plenipotentiaries to be possible to find an adjustment of differences by agreeing on an interpretation or modification of the Treaty of 1818, which will be honorable to both parties and remove the present cause of complaint, to which end they are now, as they have been from the beginning of this conference, ready to devote themselves."

It will thus be seen that the position assumed by Canada has from the first been thoroughly consistent, and continuously favourable to the adoption and maintenance of a just and reasonable measure of reciprocity with the United States.

This has been shown:—

1. In the Act passed in 1849, in the Customs Enactments of statutory offences in 1868, 1879 and 1888, and in the speedy ratification by our Parliament of the treaties of 1854, 1871 and 1888.

2. In the repeated efforts made by Canada for the continuance of the old treaty of 1854, and, after its abrogation, for the renewal of reciprocal relations on a fair and equitable basis.

On the other hand, from the time of the abrogation of the treaty of 1854 until the present, in no single case has the United States Government (a) either responded to the approaches made by Canada (b) or made any advance itself.

The Liberal-Conservative Government of Canada omits no opportunity of promoting and developing the best interests of Canada on a self-dependent basis, and at the same time avails itself of every opening to bring about a measure of honourable reciprocity with the United States.