

And whereas, for past aggressions and injuries in that regard, redress is delayed or withheld;

And whereas a recent and more stringent statute enacted by the Canadian Parliament, and approved by the Queen in Council on the 26th of November last, seems to prove those aggressions and injuries deliberate and politic, to forbode their continuance, and to project Canadian non-intercourse with American fishing vessels for general purposes of trade; therefore:

SECTION 1. That whenever the President shall be satisfied that vessels of the United States are, by British or Canadian authority, denied, or abridged in, the reasonable enjoyment of any rights, privileges, or liberties on Canadian waters, or coasts, or in Canadian ports, to which rights, privileges, or liberties, such vessels, their masters, or crews, are entitled, it shall in his discretion be lawful, and it shall in his discretion be the duty of the President to close, by a proclamation to that effect, all the ports of the United States against any and every vessel owned wholly or in part by a subject of Her Britannic Majesty, and coming or arriving from any port, or place in the Dominion of Canada, or in the Island of Newfoundland, whether directly, or having touched at any other port, excepting such vessels shall be in distress of navigation and of needed repairs or supplies therefor, and every vessel thus excluded from the ports of the United States that shall enter, or attempt to enter, the same, in violation of this act, shall with her tackle, apparel, furniture, and all the cargo on board, be seized and forfeited to the United States, or the value thereof to be recovered of the person or persons making or attempting to make entry.

SECTION 2. That it shall, in his discretion, be lawful for the President, and it shall, in his discretion, be his duty, whenever he shall be satisfied as is in the first section hereof declared, to prohibit, by proclamation, the entry, or importation, or bringing, into any collection district, or place, in the United States, of any goods, wares, or merchandise from the aforesaid Dominion of Canada, or Newfoundland, or any locomotive, car, or other vehicle, from the Dominion of Canada; but the President may, in his discretion, apply such proclamations to any part or all of the things or articles herein named, and may qualify, limit, rescind, or renew the application thereof; and all goods, wares, or merchandise, locomotives, cars, or other vehicles imported or brought, or attempted to be imported or brought, into the United States, contrary to the provisions of this Act, shall be seized and forfeited to the United States, or the value thereof to be recovered of the person or persons so importing or bringing.

SECTION 3. Any person who shall violate any of the provisions of the first or second sections of this Act, or any proclamation of the President made in pursuance hereof, shall be deemed guilty of misdemeanor, and on conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars, or by imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, or by both said punishments, in the discretion of the court.

SECTION 4. That the President be, and is hereby, authorized to appoint a commissioner to proceed to such places in the United States or elsewhere as may be designated by the Secretary of State, to take testimony, under oath or affirmation, in relation to the losses and injuries inflicted since the thirty-first of December, eighteen hundred and eighty-five, by British authorities, imperial or colonial, upon citizens of the United States engaged in the fisheries on the northeast coasts of British North America. Said commissioner shall everywhere have, in respect to the administration of oaths or affirmations and the taking of testimony, the same powers as a commissioner of a circuit court, and shall be paid the same fees as are prescribed for similar services of a commissioner of a circuit court, together with travelling expenses.

The above is but a summary:—the bill, of acts which might be ordained; the preamble, of reasons and grounds. Of course preambles can never create powers, but may serve to explain them. They are rare in the acts of Congress. The disused form was convenient to enable me to satisfy your request.

Very respectfully yours,

DANIEL MANNING.

Secretary.

Hon. PERRY BELMONT,

Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs,

House of Representatives.

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