

MESSAGE  
FROM THE  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,  
TRANSMITTING

*A treaty between the United States and Great Britain concerning the interpretation of the convention of October 20, 1818, signed at Washington February 15, 1888.*

FEBRUARY 20, 1888.—Read, treaty read the first time, referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations, and, together with the message and the accompanying documents, ordered to be printed in confidence for the use of the Senate.

*To the Senate of the United States:*

In my annual message transmitted to the Congress in December, 1886, it was stated that negotiations were then pending for the settlement of the questions growing out of the rights claimed by American fishermen in British North American waters.

As a result of such negotiations a treaty has been agreed upon between Her Britannic Majesty and the United States, concluded and signed in this capital, under my direction and authority, on the 15th of February instant, and which I now have the honor to submit to the Senate, with the recommendation that it shall receive the consent of that body, as provided in the Constitution, in order that the ratifications thereof may be duly exchanged and the treaty be carried into effect.

Shortly after Congress had adjourned in March last, and in continuation of my efforts to arrive at such an agreement between the Governments of Great Britain and the United States as would secure to the citizens of the respective countries the unmolested enjoyment of their just rights under existing treaties and international comity in the territorial waters of Canada and of Newfoundland, I availed myself of opportune occurrences indicative of a desire to make without delay an amicable and final settlement of a long-standing controversy—productive of much irritation and misunderstanding between the two nations—to send through our minister in London proposals that a conference should take place on the subject at this capital.

The experience of the past two years had demonstrated the dilatory and unsatisfactory consequences of our indirect transaction of business through the foreign office in London, in which the views and wishes of the Government of the Dominion of Canada were practically predominant, but were only to find expression at second hand.