

This is the testimony of the organ of the Gloucester fishermen. I might consume a great deal of your time in similar quotations. I turn your attention now to a book which was quoted by my learned friends on the other side, this book of Mr. Adams upon "The Fisheries and the Mississippi." At page 204 this language is used under the head of fishing liberties and their values:—

"Of these ten thousand men, and of their wives and children, the cod fisheries, if I may be allowed the expression, were the daily bread—their property—their subsistence. To how many thousands more were the labours and the dangers of their lives subservient? Their game was not only food and raiment to themselves, but to millions of other human beings.

"There is something in the very occupation of fishermen, not only beneficent in itself but noble and exalted in the qualities of which it requires the habitual exercise. In common with the cultivators of the soil, their labours contribute to the subsistence of mankind, and they have the merit of continual exposure to danger, superadded to that of unceasing toil. Industry, frugality, patience, perseverance, fortitude, intrepidity, souls inured to perpetual conflict with the elements, and bodies steeled with unremitting action, ever grappling with danger, and familiar with death; these are the properties to which the fisherman of the ocean is formed by the daily labours of his life. These are the properties for which He who knew what was in man, the Saviour of mankind, sought His first and found His most faithful, ardent, and undaunted disciples among the fishermen of His country. In the deadliest rancours of national wars, the examples of latter ages have been frequent of exempting, by the common consent of the most exasperated enemies, fishermen from the operation of hostilities. In our treaties with Prussia, they are expressly included among the classes of men '*whose occupations are for the common subsistence and benefit of mankind*;' with a stipulation, that in the event of war between the parties, they shall be allowed to continue their employment without molestation. Nor is their devotion to their country less conspicuous than their usefulness to their kind. While the huntsman of the ocean, far from his native land, from his family, and his fireside, pursues, at the constant hazard of life, his game upon the bosom of the deep, the desire of his heart, is by the nature of his situation ever intently turned towards his home, his children, and his country. To be lost to them gives their keenest edge to his fears; to return with the fruits of his labours to them is the object of all his hopes. By no men upon earth have these qualities and dispositions been more constantly exemplified than by the fishermen of New England. From the proceeds of their '*perilous and hardy industry*,' the value of three millions of dollars a year, for five years preceding 1808, was added to the exports of the United States. This was so much of national wealth created by the fishery. With what branch of the whole body of our commerce was this interest unconnected? Into what artery or vein of our political body did it not circulate wholesome blood? To what sinew of our national arm did it not impart firmness and energy? We are told that they were '*annually decreasing in number*;' Yes! they had lost their occupation by the war; and where were they during the war? They were upon the ocean and upon the lakes fighting the battles of their country. Turn back to the records of your revolution—ask Samuel Tucker himself, one of the number; a living example of the character common to them all, what were the fishermen of New England in the tug of war for independence? Appeal to the heroes of *all* our naval wars—ask the vanquishers of Algiers and Tripoli—ask the redeemers of your citizens from the chains of servitude, and of your nation from the humiliation of annual tribute to the barbarians of Africa—call on the champions of our last struggles with Britain—ask Hull and Bainbridge, ask Stewart, Porter, and Macdonough, what proportion of New England fishermen were the companions of their victories, and sealed the proudest of our victories with their blood; and *then* listen if you can, to be told that the *unoffending* citizens of the West were *not at all* benefited by the fishing privilege; and that the few fishermen in a remote quarter, were *entirely exempt from the danger*.

"But we are told also that, 'by far the greatest part of fish taken by our fishermen before the present war was caught in the open sea, or upon our own coasts, and cured on our own shores.' This assertion, is like the rest, erroneous.

"The shore fishery is carried on in vessels of less than twenty tons burthen, the proportion of which, as appears by 'Seybert's Statistical Annals,' is about one-seventh of the whole. With regard to the comparative value of the Bank, and Labrador fisheries, I subjoin hereto information collected from several persons, acquainted with them, as their statements will show in their minutest details."

I know of no language that can more forcibly bring home to the Commission the value of this fishery. If the eloquent language that I have quoted contains a tittle of the truth, then this fishery is the nursery of the American naval marine. The future maritime defenders of their country are to be found amongst the bold and fearless men who prosecute these fisheries, and amongst them alone. From the fishing vessels of America sprang those maritime defenders of her flag who maintained with undaunted bravery the honour of their country in the last war with England; and from the same source must be drawn those who doubtless would do so again if, unfortunately, another war should arise between the two countries. Yet, when we speak of such a fishery as this, we are calmly told by Mr. Foster "You must not look at these advantages at all, but like business men you must, pencil in hand, put down the figures and make a calculation of the values, as though it were a petty matter of bargain and sale between man and man." In the name of our common humanity, in the name of the common honour of England and America, and of the Dominion for which I am counsel this day, I repudiate such a construction being placed upon this Treaty.