

was cruel to the Minister of Justice, who depends on his character to a great extent, that within a week he should be compelled to draft a proclamation (and draft it very badly) granting reciprocity in these identical articles which, but a week before, he declared could not be let in without treason to the constitution. I do not know how this constant diet of humble pie may agree with hon. gentlemen opposite. I am bound to say, as regards the hon. Minister of Justice, that it does seem to agree with him; but it must be a hard thing to have to swallow it all the time, and all I can say with respect to these hon. gentlemen, is that it ought to be considered in their wages.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). He is the master of Dotheboys Hall.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I am certain of this: I have known men occupying that position who would not have consented to play such a part for seven times \$7,000 a year—aye, or for seventy-seven times \$7,000. Now, we have again the case of the hon. the Minister of Marine and Fisheries. He was obliged, like his colleagues, to devote great labor and great toil to compiling despatches, in which he set out at great length, and with very considerable force, how imperative it was for us to do all these things which he did, for the purpose of maintaining our fisheries. He showed us that our fisheries were perfectly worthless unless those customs regulations were enforced; and how completely their value would be destroyed if these identical privileges which we are now asked to concede were conceded to the American fishermen. The disavowal of all this by the Minister of Finance was very hard on the Minister of Marine and Fisheries. I think the hon. gentleman really ought not to call upon his colleagues, at any rate at such very short notice, to swallow their own words in this perfectly reckless fashion. I listened with some attention to the hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries the other evening, and I must say that his arguments savored strongly of his department. They were of the fish—fishy. There is no doubt, however, that the hon. gentleman, however well he may have succeeded in pleasing his friends on the other side, failed entirely to account for the language which he and the hon. the Minister of Justice had seen fit to use on a previous occasion with respect to these identical privileges which they now agreed to concede. I think there is no man here who has taken the trouble to examine those minutes and despatches which those hon. gentlemen laid on the Table, and to compare them, line by line, with the treaty which we are now called upon to adopt, who will not agree with me in saying that it is practically impossible for us, or for any men, to declare that this is a treaty we can be proud of. It may be a necessary dose to be swallowed, we will discuss that presently, but most assuredly, after the stand which was taken by the hon. gentleman a year ago and two years ago, no human being can say that any Canadian can be proud of the attitude in which this country finds itself to-day. Now, my main reason for desiring to speak to-night is that on the occasion of a recent debate, to which I may be pardoned for alluding, I called the attention of hon. gentlemen and their colleagues, and this House, to the fact that there was practically no argument which they could bring forward to induce us to adopt this fishery treaty, which would not also most fully justify me in the arguments that I then brought forward in defence of the right of Canada to make her own treaties and her own terms with the people of the United States. Let me for one moment recall to the attention of the House the argument which I then addressed to them. I pointed out, in the first place, that the position of Canada, in regard to the United States, was entirely exceptional. I pointed out that strict right, strict legal right, must yield to the good of the Empire at large, and I pointed out that the Em-

pire itself had adopted a totally different rule as regarded the United States from that which it had adopted with regard to any other country under the sun, and therefore I drew the conclusion that unrestricted reciprocity, though an unprecedented, was an exceptional thing, and was not contrary to the general good. What has been the argument advanced by the Minister of Fisheries? Why, point by point, step by step, that hon. gentleman has explained to this House that the position of Canada, as regards the United States, is wholly exceptional, he has explained to us that our strict legal rights must yield to the general good of the whole Empire, that the English Government have, and have for good reasons I doubt not, adopted a totally different rule in dealing with the United States from that which they have adopted in dealing with any other country, and, therefore, he drew the deduction that these unexampled concessions, as he rightly called them, might be expedient in this case. It followed, as I had warned the hon. gentleman and his followers that it would have to follow, that he has established, by his own precedent, that unusual and unexampled concessions might be made in the case of the United States. It is rather remarkable—I do not mean to say for a moment that it is to his discredit—to observe the isolation in which the hon. gentleman appears to stand in the present Cabinet. The hon. gentleman's arguments are not the arguments of his colleagues, the hon. gentleman's language is not the language of his colleagues, the hon. gentleman's ways are not the ways of his colleagues, and the resolution which he arrives at differs very widely from theirs. I observe that the hon. gentleman declare, and declared correctly in this particular instance, that the Canadians pay the duty, which is rather different from the doctrine which has been avowed by his colleagues, and not only by his colleagues but by nearly everyone who supports him on that side. He dwelt—and there I am in accord with him—upon the immense importance of the friendship of the people of the United States to the people Canada and the people of England. There again he was right, and it would be well if some of his colleagues had shown a greater appreciation of that great fact. The hon. gentleman told us, and he told us truly, that a non-intercourse Bill, or a Retaliatory Bill, whatever it might be called, would be a great injury to the people of Canada, though I do not hear that he took his colleagues to task, when they proclaimed the opposite. The hon. gentleman told us that he undertook to attempt to obtain unrestricted reciprocity, but that the Americans would not accept it. The hon. gentleman may or may not deserve well of his countrymen. There may be a difference of opinion in regard to that. But I will say that he has deserved exceedingly well of the party with which he is connected. There can be no doubt that he, and he alone, saved them in 1887, and I believe that he has saved them again in this negotiation from the consequence of their own ill-judged folly in very nearly dragging us into a collision with the people of the United States. My hon. friend who last spoke was quite right in saying that it was a very dubious question whether or not it was wise for us to proceed now to the ratification of this treaty. There are many reasons why we should not. There may be also something to be said in favor of our doing so; but in any case the Government must bear the responsibility. I have doubts whether we are doing a wise thing in ratifying this treaty at this moment, but I am aware of the differences which exist in the political constitutions of ourselves and the people of the United States; and it may be, as we are constituted, that we are nearly as much committed to the action of our Government now as the United States would be by the action of their Senate, so I am disposed to place the whole responsibility on the Government. They may be acting under pressure from the Imperial Government, or they may be acting under pressure from the Gov-