

or in any way bringing up the "headland question." This was very unsatisfactory, because, as it was said by the fishermen, "if we have these rights we should be protected in the exercise of them." And it was, therefore well that that question should be settled at once and for ever. In addition, however, to the question of headlands, a new one had arisen, of an exceedingly unpleasant nature. By the wording of the Convention of 1818, foreign fishermen were only allowed to enter our waters for the purpose of procuring wood, water, and shelter; but they claimed that they had a right, although fishing vessels, to enter our ports for trading purposes; and it was alleged by our own fishermen that under pretense of trading, American fishermen were in the habit of invading our fishing grounds, and fishing in our waters. The Canadian Government thought it therefore well, to press, not only by correspondence, but by a delegate, who was a member of the Government, upon Her Majesty's Government the propriety of having that question settled with the United States, and consequently my friend and colleague, the Postmaster General, went to England to deal with that subject. The results of his mission are before Parliament. At the same time that he dealt with the question I have just mentioned, he pressed upon the consideration of Her Majesty's Government the propriety of England making, on our behalf, a demand on the United States Government for reparation for the wrongs known as "the Fenian Raids." England agreed to press upon the United States both these matters, and to ask that all the disputed questions relating to the inshore fisheries, under the Convention of 1818, should be settled in some mode, to be agreed upon between the two nations; and also to press upon the United States the wrong sustained by Canada at the hands of citizens of the United States, who had invaded our country. Before Her Majesty's Government had actually, in compliance with their promise, made any representation on these two subjects to the United States Government, England had been engaged, on her own behalf, in a controversy of a very grave character. It was known that what was commonly known as the "Alabama Claims," was a subject of dispute between the two countries, involving the gravest consequences, and that hitherto the results had been most unsatisfactory. An attempt had been made to settle the question by what was known as the Johnson-Clarendon Treaty, but that Treaty had been rejected by the United States authorities. So long as this question remained unsettled between the two nations there was no possibility of the old friendly relations that had so long existed between them being restored, and England felt that it was of the first importance to her that those amicable relations should be restored. It was not only her desire to be in the most friendly position towards a country which was so closely associated with her by every tie—by common origin, by common interest, by com-

mon language—but it was also her interest to have every cloud removed between the two nations, because she had reason to feel that her position with respect to the other Great Powers of the world was greatly affected by the knowledge which those other nations had of the position of affairs between the United States and herself. The prestige of Great Britain as a great Power was affected most seriously by the absence of an *entente cordiale* between the two nations. Two years ago England was, as a matter of course, greatly interested in the great and serious questions which were then convulsing Europe, and was in danger of being drawn by some complication into hostile relations with some of the conflicting Powers, and she felt,—and I speak merely what must be obvious to every hon member in the House, that she could not press or assert her opinion, with the same freedom of action, so long as she was aware, and so long as other nations were aware, that in case she should be unfortunately placed in a state of hostility with any nation whatever, the United States Government would be forced by the United States people to press at that very time, when she might be engaged in mortal conflict with another nation,—for a settlement of those Alabama claims. Hence, Mr. Speaker, the great desire of England in my opinion, that that great question should be settled, and hence also, the intermingling of the particular questions relating to Canada with the larger Imperial questions. And, sir, in my opinion, it was of greater consequence to Canada than to England, at least of as great consequence, that the Alabama question should be settled (cheers). Sir, England has promised to us, and we have all faith in that promise, that in case of war, the whole force of the Empire should be exerted in our defence (cheers). What would have been the position of England, and what would have been the position of Canada, if she had been called upon to use her whole force to defend us, when engaged in conflict elsewhere. Canada would, as a matter of course in case of war between England and the United States, be the battle ground. We should be the sufferers, our country would be devastated, our people slaughtered, and our property destroyed; and while England would, I believe, under all circumstances, faithfully perform her promise to the utmost (cheers), she would be greatly impeded in carrying out her desire, if engaged elsewhere. It was therefore, as much the interest of this Dominion as of England, that the Alabama and all other questions that in any way threatened the disturbance of the peaceful relations between the two countries should be settled and adjusted; and therefore, although to a considerable extent I agree with the remarks that fell from the Minister of Finance when he made his Budget speech, that looking at the subject in a commercial point of view, it might have been better, in the interest of Canada, that the fishery and Fenian ques-