

friends who are still my colleagues, and we took every step in our power, we spared no effort, we left no stone unturned, in order to gain that object. The House will remember that for the purpose of either effecting a renewal of the Treaty, or if we could not obtain that, of arriving at the same object by means of concurrent legislation, my honorable friend the member for Sherbrooke, at that time Finance Minister, and the present Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, went to Washington on behalf of the Government of Canada. It is a matter of history that all their exertions failed, and after their failure by the general consent—a consent in which I believe the people of Canada were as one man—we came to the conclusion that it would be humiliating to Canada to make any further exertions at Washington, or to do anything more in the way of pressing for the renewal of that instrument, and the people of this country with great energy addressed themselves to find other channels of trade—other means of developing and sustaining our various industries, in which I am happy to say they have been completely successful. Immediately on the expiration of the Treaty our right to the exclusive use of the inshore fisheries returned to us, and it will be in remembrance of the House that Her Majesty's Government desired us not to resume, at least for a year, that right to the exclusion of American fishermen, and that the prohibition of Americans fishing in those waters should not be put in force either by Canada or the Maritime Provinces. All the Provinces, I believe, declined to accede to the suggestion, and it was pressed strongly on behalf of the late Province of Canada that it would be against our interests if for a moment after the Treaty ceased we allowed it to be supposed that American fishermen had a right to come into our waters as before; and it was only because of the pressure of Her Majesty's Government, and our desire to be in accord with that Government, as well as because of our desire to carry with us the moral support of Great Britain, and the material assistance of her fleet, that we assented with great reluctance to the introduction of a system of licenses for one year at a nominal fee or rate. This was done avowedly by us for the purpose of asserting our right. No greater or stronger mode of asserting a right and obtaining the acknowledgment of it by those who desired to enter our waters for the purpose of fishing could be devised than by exacting payment for the permission and therefore it was that we assented to the licensing system (hear, hear). Although in 1866 that system was commenced, it did not come immediately into force. We had not then fitted out a Marine Police Force, for we were not altogether without expectation that the mind of the Government of the United States might take a different direction, and that there was a probability of negotiations being renewed respecting the revival of the Reciprocity Treaty; and therefore although the system was established, it was not rigidly put in force,

and no great exertion was made to seize trespassers who had not taken out license. In the first year however a great number of licenses were taken out, but when the fee was increased so as to render it a substantial recognition of our rights the payments became fewer and fewer, until at last it was found that the vessels who took out licenses were the exception, and that the great bulk of fishermen who entered our waters were trespassers; and in addition to the fact that our fisheries were invaded, that we were receiving no consideration for the liberty, and that our rights were invaded boldly and aggressively, it was now stated by the American Government or members of the American Cabinet that the renewal of the Reciprocity Treaty was not only inexpedient, but unconstitutional, and that no such renewal could or would be made. The Government of Canada then in 1870, after conference with the Imperial Government, and after receiving the promise of the Imperial Government that we should have the support of their fleet in the protection of our just rights—a promise which was faithfully carried out,—prepared and fitted out a sufficient force of Marine Police vessels to protect our rights, and I am glad to believe that that policy was perfectly successful. Great firmness was used, but, at the same time, great discretion: there was no harshness, and no seizures were made of a doubtful character. No desire to harass the foreign fishermen was evidenced, but, on the contrary, in any case in which there was doubt the officers in command of the seizing vessel reported to the head of their Department, and when the papers were laid before Government, they in all cases gave the offending parties the benefit of the doubt. Still, as it would be remembered, some of the fishermen made complaints, which complaints, although unjust, I am sorry to say were in some instances made and supported on oath, of harshness on the part of the cruisers, and an attempt was made to agitate the public mind of the United States against the people of Canada, and there was at that time a feeling on the part of a large portion of the people of the United States, which feeling I am, however, happy to say has since disappeared, that the action of Canada was unfriendly. Her Majesty's Government were of course appealed to by the authorities of the United States on all these subjects, and the complaints were bandied from one Government to the other, and proved a source of great irritation. While this feeling was being raised in the United States there was, on the other hand, a feeling among our fishermen that our rights were, to a very great degree, invaded. In order to avoid the possibility of dispute, in order to avoid any appearance of harshness, in order, while we were supporting our fishery rights, to prevent any case of collision between the Imperial Government and the United States, or between the Canadian authorities and the United States, we avoided making seizures within the bays,