

pelled every vessel no matter from what country, entering one of our ports to report herself and declare what her business was. So that if an American fisherman chooses to visit our coast for any of the purposes, which give him the right to enter, the Collector of Customs must know his business, must know whether it is lawful, must know what he has and what he gets, and see that he does not violate any of the provisions of the Customs law. But if fishing vessels were allowed to come and go and stay as long as they pleased, there would be no chance for preserving either our rights to our fisheries, or our Customs laws. Let those who complain in regard to the Customs laws—let those who say that they are unnecessarily severe—turn to the Revised Statutes of the United States, section 2,774, and they will find there what the requirements of the United States are with regard to vessels entering American waters. They will find that every vessel, once she goes into American waters, must enter at the Customs before she dares to depart. It is true she has twenty-four hours to enter, but she has not the privilege to leave in the twenty-four hours, under a heavy penalty; and if they will turn to the reports of the cases in the Supreme Court of the United States, which are noted in the margin of that section of the Revised Statutes of the United States, they will find that by the decisions of the United States Supreme Court those provisions are held to extend to every vessel, even when driven by tempest into American harbors. So that for the last eighty or ninety years, and to-day, the statutory provisions of the United States have been as strict as has been our law, which we enforced in 1886. I suppose it will be said, as it has been said on the part of the United States, and as has been said here to-night: "Is it not cruel and unneighborly to the sixty millions of people who are our neighbors, that we should compel American vessels coming to our ports to enter at the Customs house when we know they come in for shelter or repairs?" As I told the House, it is necessary that we should have some supervision over these fishing vessels in our waters, and the hon. member for Queen's (Mr. Davies) was so sensible of the necessity of such supervision, that he wanted them boarded before they came in. This is no new provision. In the United States, as late as 22nd June, 1887, after the Committee of the Senate had made a report of these 63 so-called outrages which were spoken of to-night—after our conduct had been stigmatised all over the United States as harsh and brutal because we enforced the Customs laws, and when we were enforcing the Customs laws, as stated by the hon. member for Queen's, to exasperate the people of the United States, it will be found that Mr. Fairchild, Secretary of the Treasury, gave an important decision on 22nd June, 1887. In that case, which was the case of some Spanish fishing smacks which had run in under stress of weather to buy provisions, and, having bought provisions, because they dared to depart without reporting at the Customs, they were seized and fined by the collector \$500; but Mr. Fairchild had the magnanimity to reduce the fines to \$40 for each smack. It was a pretty severe warning to them not to venture to enter an American harbor for necessary supplies to sustain life without making entry at the Customs house in accordance with the Revised Statutes of the United States, the nature of which he pointed out to them, and made them remember in a way they and their neighbors are not likely to forget. Now, we were told that it was a happy thing for Canada that there existed in the borders of the United States a Canadian citizen, who, finding that the United States and Canada were almost approaching the verge of war on account of Canada having maintained the simple, plain and undoubted rights which she had exercised and enjoyed for upwards of 70 years, volunteered to act as mediator. We were told it was a happy thing there existed a mediator who could bring the two nations together. This matter was called to the attention of the House by what I think was a misconstruction of the language the hon.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON.

Minister of Finance used last Session. It was brought to the attention of the House as if the whole credit of these negotiations, and of any negotiations having taken place at all, was due to a private citizen of Canada now living in the United States. Now, the fact is, that before Mr. Wiman made a single proposal in the direction of negotiations between the Governments of Canada and the United States, despatches had passed between the Washington and the British Governments, and between the British Government and Canada, putting these negotiations on foot, and declaring that there were to be negotiations in which all the relations between the two countries relating to trade, as well as to fisheries, were to be taken up; and it was only after negotiations were thoroughly on foot that Mr. Wiman interjected himself and proposed, before these negotiations should be formally opened, that it would be expedient for some member of the Canadian Government to proceed to the capital of the United States. Yet the House was told the other night, and to-night, that had it not been for that mediation the two countries would have been at each other's throats, and mediation would have been impossible. I do not intend to question the motives which Mr. Wiman had in his interference, nor do I doubt his desire to promote peace between the two countries. But I say that the small part which he played in the transaction has been magnified to ridiculous proportions in this debate. It was said, also, by the leader of the Opposition that Mr. Bayard had written a letter to Sir Charles Tupper proposing trade negotiations, and that, when the proposals had been made by the British plenipotentiaries in the terms of that letter, they were refused because of the irritation which the United States Government felt at the action of Canada on the fishery question. The fact is, and, if the hon. member who made the statement will examine the record, he will be so convinced of it that I believe he will withdraw his assertion, that between those two periods there was nothing whatever in the conduct of Canada to cause any irritation on the part of the United States Government or people. There had been no opportunity for such irritation, because the winter had intervened and spring had not commenced. There had been no frequenting of our waters by American fishing vessels, there had been no action taken, there had been no irritation, no threat, or anything on our part which could give any reason for the withdrawal of the proposal. The statement to that effect which has been made in this debate, with a view to injure the Government, the assertion that we embarrassed those negotiations by pursuing a course of irritation in the meantime, is absolutely contrary to the fact and without a particle of foundation. When the offer was made, it was rejected for reasons which are patent to everybody in the two countries, namely: that, while no doubt Mr. Bayard was sincere in the proposal he made originally that the discussions should include matters of trade and commerce, he found in the interval, not that we had treated his people harshly, and that he was, therefore, justified in withdrawing his proposal, but that the temper and feeling of the two parties in the United States, of one of which he was a member, was such that they would not agree to anything of the sort, and that if any attempt was made on the part of the United States to discuss trade concessions there was an end to the slightest hope of a treaty being concluded in regard to the fisheries. That which was due to the strong feeling of the republican party against free trade and to the sensitiveness of the democratic party to the charge of favoring free trade, has been, for the first time, put down to the blustering course pursued by the Government of Canada. We have been told that we backed down in 1887—that so volatile, so fluctuating was our policy that, while in 1886 we persisted in these seizures, in 1887 we had not a single seizure to record. The reason for that is as plain and as obvious to the hon. gentleman who made the state-