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THE FISHERIES.

One of the gravest and most delicate questions with which our Government has had to deal, has been that of the fisheries. The common privileges conceded under the reciprocity treaty have been continued up to the present year under conditions which the American fishermen practically disregarded. Discontent was therefore spreading rapidly among our fishermen, and many of them betook themselves to the coast towns in the United States, because by fishing as American citizens, they

enjoyed the use of the Canadian waters with the freedom of American markets. Such an uneven competition could not be maintained without great injury to Canadian interests; and our Government at length prevailed upon the Imperial authorities to consent to the reassertion of British rights as defined by the treaty of 1818. The fact that this measure has been undertaken with the full approbation of the Gladstone cabinet, and that its execution is to be supported by the British fleet, is surely not indicative of that intention to abandon Canada of

which so much is said now-a-days. When the Reciprocity Treaty was abolished, it may be remembered that the Americans were labouring under a keen sense of irritation; they were angry with England, and not indisposed to find fault with anything Canada might do; and it was therefore probably the very wisest statesmanship to give no opportunity for picking a quarrel out of the fishery question. But year after year, the American fishermen refused to pay the small license fee, and continued to fish in Canadian waters. This country had given ample proof

