

for, I rejoice to believe, still lives. The manner in which the great journals the Empire over have taken up our cause declares to this effect.

There have been a few newspapers on the other side of the Atlantic that have described our conflict with His Majesty's Government as "much ado about nothing." The writers of such articles surely could not have understood the seriousness of the situation. There are 55,000 men with their wives and children in this colony whose daily bread depends upon the successful prosecution of the fisheries. The continuance of these fisheries depends upon the manner in which they are conducted, and therefore this Legislature has from time to time passed laws to prevent the pollution of the waters of the bays, harbours and coves around the coasts of this colony and of the Labrador; to regulate the seasons during which certain fish may be caught, and to determine the instruments of capture that may be employed by the fishermen. Within the fishery areas of this colony the Imperial Government has granted to the citizens of foreign nations (France and the United States of America) certain rights of fishing "in common" with British subjects. If the words "in common" meant anything, I submit they conveyed to foreigners the right to fish side by side with British fishermen within the prescribed areas set out in the treaty or grant, at the same seasons, with the same implements of capture, and subject to the same regulations. If this was not the meaning of the words then the foreign fishermen were free to destroy the fishery by polluting the waters, by using improper instruments of capture, and by fishing at all seasons of the year. We cannot conceive of a Government consisting of sane men granting rights to the subjects of a foreign power to destroy the living of its own subjects and the food supplies of millions of other human beings. Yet that is the contention of the United States Government, and in that contention His Majesty's Government has at least temporarily acquiesced by ratifying the Modus Vivendi. The American Government have contended that under the treaty of 1818 they are not subject to our fishery and municipal laws, and by ratifying the Modus Vivendi His Majesty's Government has not only temporarily approved that assertion but has attempted to protect the citizens of the United States from the consequences of a violation of our laws. Let us follow this contention to its logical conclusion, and not only must we look forward to the destruction of our West Coast fishery, but to the Labrador fishery as well, and Americans have greater rights on the Labrador than they have on the West Coast of

this colony. Can any member of this House contemplate such a possibility without feelings of alarm? Can they regard the action of this Government in relation to the Modus Vivendi as "much ado about nothing?" Would any section of the British press regard things in that light if the inshore fisheries of Great Britain were to be invaded by foreign fishermen who set the statute laws at defiance? I think not. The laws of this land when approved by the Crown are the laws of the Empire. It should not be forgotten that England's honor is as much at stake in upholding those laws as it passed by the Imperial Parliament.

England in the past has had to look to the fisheries of this Colony as a nursery for her navy. Turn back to the record of the Great Naval struggles in which she conquered! Appeal to the heroes of that great naval warfare which laid the foundations of that great Colonial Empire which has brought to England during the present century both wealth and power! Ask them who were the companions of their victories! The answer will come back through the centuries that Newfoundland fishermen sealed the proudest of their victories with their blood. England is looking to this Colony for material for her Navy. Seven years ago an appeal was made to the young fishermen of Newfoundland to enter her Naval Reserve. The appeal was answered with enthusiasm. Hundreds of brave young fishermen have pledged their lives to the Empire, and hundreds more are willing to do so. Be it known that this is the only Colony of the Empire whose sons may be called upon by the Admiralty in time of war. I regret to learn that recently a large number of Reservists decline to re-enroll. I do not know the reason for their so doing, but I cannot imagine that the episode with which I have been dealing was calculated to inspire enthusiasm or to intensify the loyalty of the fisherfolk of Newfoundland.

It has been stated by His Majesty's Government, that the Modus Vivendi is for one season only—a period sufficiently long for the operation of such an unprecedented and humiliating agreement. I think, however, that after this House has given consideration to the papers which have been tabled and to the circumstances to which they relate, it will be regarded as necessary that this humble and respectful address to the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies do pass, praying that if the rights of this Colony cannot be attained by diplomatic negotiation, then His Majesty's Government will proceed on a strict definition of the Treaty of 1818.