

character of the vessel and the nature of her outfit, and that the class to which she belongs is not to be determined by the simple declaration of her master, that he is not at any given time acting in the character of a fisherman.

“At the same time, the Undersigned begs again to observe that Canada has no desire to interrupt the long-established and legitimate commercial intercourse with the United States, but rather to encourage and maintain it, and that Canadian ports are at present open to the whole merchant navy of the United States on the same liberal conditions as heretofore accorded.”

On the 7th June, 1886, the Canadian Governor-General advised the Minister of Foreign Affairs at London:—

“No attempt has been made, either by the authorities intrusted with the enforcement of the existing law or by the Parliament of the Dominion, to interfere with vessels engaged in *bond fide* commercial transactions upon the coast of the Dominion. The two vessels which have been seized are both of them beyond all question fishing-vessels, and not traders, and therefore liable, subject to the finding of the Courts, to any penalties imposed by law for the enforcement of the Convention of 1818 on parties violating the terms of that Convention.”

On the 14th June, 1886, a Committee of the Privy Council for Canada put forth the following opinions and conclusions, which were approved by the Governor-General:—

“It is not, however, the case that the Convention of 1818 affected only the inshore fisheries of the British provinces; it was framed with the object of affording a complete and exclusive definition of the rights and liberties which the fishermen of the United States were thenceforward to enjoy in following their vocation, so far as those rights could be affected by facilities for access to the shores or waters of the British provinces, or for intercourse with their people. It is therefore no undue expansion of the scope of that Convention to interpret strictly those of its provisions by which such access is denied, except to vessels requiring it for the purposes specifically described.

“Such an undue expansion would, upon the other hand, certainly take place if, under cover of its provisions or of any agreement relating to general commercial intercourse which may have since been made, permission were accorded to United States’ fishermen to resort habitually to the harbours of the Dominion, not for the sake of seeking safety for their vessels, or of avoiding risk to human life, but in order to use those harbours as a general base of operations from which to prosecute and organize with greater advantage to themselves the industry in which they are engaged.

“It was in order to guard against such an abuse of the provisions of the Treaty that amongst them was included the stipulation, that not only should the inshore fisheries be reserved to British fishermen, but that the United States should renounce the right of their fishermen to enter the bays or harbours, excepting for the four specified purposes, which do not include the purchase of bait or other appliances, whether intended for the deep-sea fisheries or not.

“The Undersigned, therefore, cannot concur in Mr. Bayard’s contention, that ‘to prevent the purchase of bait, or any other supply needed for deep-sea fishing, would be to expand the Convention to objects wholly beyond the purview, scope, and intent of the Treaty, and to give to it an effect never contemplated.’

“Mr. Bayard suggests that the possession by a fishing-vessel of a permit to ‘touch and trade’ should give to her a right to enter Canadian ports for other than the purposes named in the Treaty, or, in other words, should give her perfect immunity from its provisions. This would amount to a practical repeal of the Treaty, because it would enable a United States’ Collector of Customs, by issuing a licence originally only intended for purposes of domestic Customs regulation, to give exemption from the Treaty to every United States’ fishing-vessel. The observation that similar vessels under the British flag have the right to enter the ports of the United States for the purchase of supplies loses its force when it is remembered that the Convention of 1818 contained no restriction on British vessels and no renunciation of any privileges in regard to them.”

On the 14th August, 1886, the Minister of Marine and Fisheries said:—

“There seems no doubt, therefore, that the ‘Novelty’ was in character and in purpose a fishing-vessel, and as such comes under the provisions of the Treaty of 1818, which allows United States’ fishing-vessels to enter Canadian ports ‘for the purpose of shelter and repairing damages therein, and of purchasing wood and of obtaining water, and for no other purpose whatever.’

“The object of the captain was to obtain supplies for the prosecution of his fishing, and to tranship his cargoes of fish at a Canadian port, both of which are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention of 1818.”