

the spirit of self-sacrifice. In the first place, as I have already intimated, we have practically given up the headland point altogether, in spite of a case which we consider unassailable in point of law, and which we used before 1854 to enforce the repeated seizures and condemnations of American vessels. We now allow them to fish anywhere up to the three mile limit of the actual shore line. But even as to these limits we were anxious on every ground to avoid complications and have the best relations with the Americans, and to this end we were willing virtually to share the fisheries with them. All that we asked was that American fishing vessels should pay a nominal tonnage license for the privilege of fishing anywhere, and we fixed this at so low a rate that it really amounted to no more than a sort of pepper corn rental acknowledgment of right. Here is the statement of the operations of the system:—In 1866 there were 354 licenses; in 1867 there were 281 licenses; in 1868 there were fifty-six licenses; in 1869 there were twenty-five licenses. Now, sir, you will readily see on a simple view of this table how numerous were the cases of trespass without license during this period. But during the whole of these four seasons not a single American vessel was detained. During this period also we indulged American fishermen with repeated warnings, and it was probably this which spoiled our license system; for it practically rendered trespassing upon our fishing grounds a thing without danger. But it completely shows the spirit in which we acted throughout this time. But you can see at a glance that it was impossible for us to allow such a state of things to go on. We might just as well have surrendered the fisheries altogether. They are our property, and property which we are willing to share with Americans on just terms, which we have very nearly sacrificed altogether. We are now fully purposed not to do this without a just equivalent. While we carried on this licensing system we virtually put up with boundless trespassing, while at the same time pray observe that British caught fish are all the time subject to a virtually prohibitory duty in American ports. It is too much. They seem to want the right to take our fish and exclude our fishermen from their markets. But we are satisfied the just and generous American public do not understand this question. And that is why we rejoice at his opportunity of laying it before them. Well, sir, we were obliged to reconsider our position, not only on the grounds mentioned, but because during the period since 1866 the American fishermen com-

mitted other infractions of the Treaty of 1818, such as frequenting our harbours to transfer cargoes and take supplies, creating riots and disturbances and defying the laws. In 1869 our shores swarmed with American fishing vessels which would not pay the license fee, and we had the undoubted evidence before us that, owing to the prohibitory duties of British caught fish, and our practical surrender of our rights to American fishing vessels, the Dominion fishermen were beginning to man the American vessels, and our whole fishing trade and property were threatened with extinction. It became absolutely necessary for us to retrace our steps. And therefore we have practically this season resumed our position under the Treaty of 1818, except only that we have, as I have before pointed out, put in abeyance the headland question. We now only maintain the two points—one, exclusive inshore fishing line, and the absolute necessary distinction of character between a fishing and a trading vessel—a distinction absolutely necessary to the fishing property and the revenue system. We maintain, therefore, sir, that our conduct has been in the highest degree friendly and generous, and we have great right to complain of its being represented under a different light by so high an official as the chief of the Republic himself. If he proposes to bind together all sections of American people in one common American sentiment by such a course, it seems to us, to say the least of it, that he will not succeed.

HERALD COMMISSIONER—The President in his Message intimates that your legislation of late has been both unfriendly and novel in enforcement of your fishing rights.

DOMINION STATESMAN—The President is misinformed, and it is greatly to be wished that he would study these points for himself, or be sure of those whose studies he depends upon. Our legislation has been no more than a transcript of that older legislation on the subject, which, as I have said, was never complained of on the ground of right during the whole period between 1818 and 1854. Nor have we ever attempted to enforce our municipal legislation, except in the undoubted three-mile limit from the shore. But allow me to state what has happened. At the beginning of the year 1870, we notified to the American government that we felt ourselves obliged now strictly to enforce the rule of exclusion from the shore line of three miles; not, be it observed, from headlands. During the year 1870 we have enforced that conclusion. There have been a few seizures within the three mile limit, pray observe, for illegal fishing. There