

Bill was loaded with the most gigantic scheme of public spoliation that ever startled a Canadian parliament. No less than 3,750,000 acres of the picked gold fields of the Yukon were to be handed over to the trusted friends of the government, Messrs. Mackenzie & Mann, not for their sole benefit may be sure, as one of the considerations for that worthless undertaking. When we know that more than thirty millions of dollars of the precious metal have been exported from the Yukon in some years since, we can form some idea of the bonanza the enterprising Minister of the Interior would have had for distribution among his friends, had his Bill not been defeated in the Senate. When the action of this House became known to the public, many men who were never known to utter a good word concerning this Chamber, exclaimed, 'Thank God, we have a Senate.'

But, no matter how the Alaskan treaty ends, I am decidedly of opinion that there should be no further meeting of the Joint High Commission. Our invaluable Atlantic fisheries are of far greater national importance than the gold of the Yukon, and I fear they would not be safe in the hands of the Joint High Commission. The fishery treaty negotiated in 1888 by Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Charles Tupper was a very liberal arrangement on the part of Canada, and was strongly recommended as such by President Cleveland in his message to the Senate at the time, but it was rejected by that body with little ceremony. Hence the recurrence to the *modus vivendi* by which the United States for a paltry tonnage fee gets all the privileges her fishermen want in connection with our Atlantic fisheries. This arrangement, which was only intended to be temporary, has now existed many years, and should be abrogated at any early day, and our fisheries adequately protected by the enforcement of the provisions of the treaty of 1818. Indeed, reviewing our past experiences with the United States, it would seem our grasping and not-over-scrupulous neighbours consider they have a right to come out away on top every time, in their disputes with England or Canada.

The readjustment of the representation in the House of Commons of all the provinces of the Dominion, as well as the territories, rendered necessary by the terms of the British North American Act of 1867,

must necessarily be accompanied by a measure for the redistribution of the constituencies, and will no doubt prove the occasion of heated discussions in another place, unless the government relegate the latter subject to a really impartial commission of the highest and ablest judges in the land, and thus set an example that must be followed by their opponents in the future when they come into power. It is regrettable that the loss of representation which all the old provinces, except Quebec, are to sustain in the coming readjustment, cannot take place without a bitter feeling in some quarters, that the census has been manipulated to the injury of the English-speaking provinces for the benefit of Quebec. I am not in a position to say how far this feeling is justified, but it certainly does exist, nor is the province of Nova Scotia exempt from it, where we stand to lose two members.

It is amusing, however, to read the expedients suggested by some provincial legislators to mollify local feeling where losses are inevitable under the census of 1901. But are not these gentlemen interfering with a subject that comes constitutionally within the scope of the duties that fall on their representatives in the federal parliament? There is no reason to suppose that our federal representatives are not alive to the exigencies of the situation, and will fail in their obligations to their constituents when the proper time arrives. It appears to me there is only one course open to the government, and that is to be guided by the constitution, and only the constitution, in readjusting the representation of the House of Commons. In number of members lost, Ontario will be the largest sufferer, but not the largest sufferer in proportion to population. No matter, however, where the loss falls, at the present time, this question must be settled by the plain construction of the British North America Act, which cannot be every day ignored or amended to suit the local whims of any section of the Dominion; but then we must have an honest Redistribution Act.

Although the speech is silent on the subject, it is generally believed that parliament will be called upon to increase the subsidies now paid to the provinces toward the support of the local governments. These increases it is said will amount to over