

Having given that despatch of the Governor General and the Minute of the Canadian Government the fullest consideration, we felt bound to adhere to the policy which we had previously expressed; and we drew up a strong remonstrance to the proposal which the Canadian Cabinet, in deference to the wishes of the Imperial authorities, had agreed to. We addressed this remonstrance to the British Government, and we urged by every argument we could devise the adoption of our own policy. In the meantime the House will perceive that the Government of Canada had yielded the point, and had agreed, as far as they were concerned, to adopt the system for a year. We were placed in a very difficult position, but, nevertheless, we persevered in it until the very last extremity. We stood out until we received a despatch from her Majesty's Government expressing the strongest dissatisfaction with the refusal on our part, on a question of Imperial import, to be guided by their wishes, and even going further, and intimating in pretty strong language that if we continued to disregard their wishes we would not be in a position to claim their assistance in the event of our fishing grounds being encroached upon. The Colonial Minister stated in a despatch which is among these papers, that they urged the adoption of this system for a single year, under the belief that such a concession on our part would lead to the renewal of reciprocal trade between the United States and the British American Provinces. If we had continued to resist the wishes of the Imperial Government, we would therefore not only have given the deepest offence, but have laid ourselves open to a charge of having prevented the re-establishment of satisfactory commercial relations with the United States.

It is to me a matter of intense pride that I am able to stand here and vindicate the course which the Government have pursued, and prove to the Legislature that everything that was possible was done to carry out the scheme of this House, and the views of gentlemen on both sides. It will be seen that that Government only yielded to the wishes of the Imperial Government when expressed with a vigor and terseness that are not usual in the despatches of the Imperial authorities, and when it was urged that the policy which we had adopted as the true one would be detrimental to the best interests of this country. It may be said that the Government of Canada yielded a much more ready deference to the Imperial authorities than did the Government of this Province. That may be offered as one reason why it is not advisable that Nova Scotia should unite her interests more closely with those of Canada. I receive, however, an entirely different impression from the history of this question. In this instance the Canadian authorities have given weight and force to other more important and pressing interests, and have not exhibited that deep anxiety in these fisheries which they must do when they are immediately interested in them under the scheme of union. When the Provinces are

united, then the Canadians will have the same direct interest in the British American fisheries that this Province has. Then you will have brought to bear on Canada the same influences that prevail with us; but I go a step further, and I call the attention of hon. members and of the intelligent people of this country to the fact that the government of Nova Scotia is here proved to have been unable to oppose a policy which was concurred in by Canada. That province, on account of her immense territorial area, of her large population compared with that of Nova Scotia, now possesses an influence which overshadows that of all the other provinces. The moment, however, that union is consummated, the interests of Canada becomes identical with those of Nova Scotia. Connected with her sister province, Nova Scotia will possess an amount of power and influence that, now isolated, she can never expect to have. We shall have the means, in the Parliament of a united British America, of making the influence of this province felt in reference to a question in which so large a proportion of the people have the deepest interest.

This tax was simply imposed for a single year for the purpose of establishing in the most unequivocal manner the right of British Americans to exclude the citizens of any foreign power from their fishing grounds. I may be asked what shall be the course during the present year. I must frankly state to you that the same policy must probably be pursued, simply for the reason that the delay which has taken place in accomplishing the union of the colonies, would prevent the question receiving the only decisive consideration that it would have been possible to give it. As far as I have been able to learn by communication with the members of the Governments of Canada and New Brunswick, the policy of the present year will be to double the charge upon every ton of shipping which is allowed to fish in our waters—thus again re-establishing the entire right of British America to exclude foreigners from its fishing grounds, and to admit them on whatever terms it may deem proper. The object of Canada, let me say in conclusion, was to defer to the Imperial Government until we were united and able to devise such a policy as the United Parliament may think proper to pursue. If the United States will not agree to liberal commercial arrangements, then I entertain no doubt that the policy of the Government of British America will be immediately to exclude the fishermen of that country from any anticipation in our fishing grounds. When I had an opportunity of conferring with the Canadian Government at Ottawa on this subject, it was decided that the Canadians should only receive such portion of the duty collected as was required to meet the expenses of issuing the licenses. The amount received by the authorities in this Province for licenses was \$9871.69. The amount taken by the Canadian Government must have been very much larger, and when ascertained, it will be divided between the Governments of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, with the exception