

May 14, 1872

and they would compete with us as they had during the last two years in the markets of the West Indies.

If under his views we would gain a trifle in the American market—even supposing such things were correct, which he contended were not—we would more than lose the advantage in our trade with other countries. We had exported last year 163,000 barrels of pickled fish, only 45,000 of which went to the United States; and if American fishermen competed with us they would send their fish to the West Indies and decrease the price more in proportion than what the hon. gentleman claimed we would gain by having their markets.

It was said our fishermen were in favour of the Treaty. He denied it. (*Hear, hear.*) Many of them were, but he utterly denied that the majority of the people of Nova Scotia favoured it. He did not mean to say that every man who was in favour of it was an annexationist, but he did assert that every man in Nova Scotia who was an annexationist and looked forward to early political connection with the States was in favour of it. (*Hear, hear.*) And they were right enough from their point of view, because they argued, if you give those people the water they will soon own the land. If our fishermen were not so much opposed to the Treaty as he thought they ought to be it was because of the argument of hon. gentlemen opposite, to the effect “in the interest of the empire;” and “England would not protect us;” and “we had better take a loaf than no bread;” and that if they did not accept this emasculated arrangement, which just condemns themselves, the Americans would get the whole—those were the circumstances under which these men were not all satisfied.

But fish was not all Nova Scotia produced. She had great mineral wealth, and her coal interest was of even greater importance than her fisheries, yet this had been entirely overlooked. Those interested in the case said and with very great force, that if the Government had been earnestly desirous of reducing the duty on coal, they would have avoided the seizures which they made during last year. From the moment the schooner Horton was recaptured by the Americans and towed into Gloucester, whatever chance existed for the reduction of the duty on coal and lumber was lost. The hon. gentlemen opposite and the Minister of Justice especially had asked hon. members not to put troublesome questions, not to suggest doubts with reference to the Treaty; yet the hon. member for Peel (Hon. Mr. Cameron) in his brilliant address had left an impression on the House that Americans almost had a right to the Fisheries, because they had enjoyed them for 17 years longer than they had been excluded from them. He (Mr. Jones) took a directly opposite view of the question. His colleague referred last night to one argument in favour of the Treaty, that trade to Cuba would be injured by its annexation to the United States. The hon. gentleman should know that we are obliged to pay a duty on goods exported to that island, double that on the same goods exported to the United States:

therefore trade would hardly be injured by the annexation of the island.

The hon. member for Lanark North (Hon. Mr. McDougall) had referred to the fact that Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland had accepted the Treaty; and New Brunswick and Nova Scotia had not apparently been very warmly opposed to it. The hon. gentleman had also sought to create the impression that the Government of New Brunswick were acting in concert with the Clear Grit party when they took the step they did in communicating with the Government of Nova Scotia on the subject. The resolution of the New Brunswick Legislature was passed on the 18th February, while the High Commission was sitting, and when it was thought that the opinion of the Legislature would strengthen the hands of those who had charge of our interests; they accordingly telegraphed to Newfoundland, and as the latter had no interest but the fishing interest to consider, they replied that they were well satisfied to leave the matter to England, for the reason that she had left them to exercise their own discretion and free will on the subject of entering the Confederation or not. That was a very good reason for Newfoundland, because she had been accorded a privilege which had been denied Nova Scotia.

He might here remark, as an instance of the singular inaccuracies and want of information which characterized the whole negotiation, that the important interest of seal fishing had been entirely unprovided for in the Treaty. The Governor of Newfoundland made a communication to Earl Kimberley, enclosing a copy of a minute of the Council of the Local Government on the subject. That minute of the Council was not among the papers submitted to the House. The reply of the Government of Prince Edward Island was worthy of attention, because they occupied a position precisely similar to that of Nova Scotia. The people of Prince Edward Island had valuable fisheries, but they said they were in the hands of the Americans already; and the agricultural product of that Island far exceeded the value of the fisheries.

The people of Prince Edward Island had precisely the same interest in the fisheries as we had, but they were willing for Imperial interests alone to agree to what was asked of them by the Government of England. The people of Prince Edward Island did not adopt the policy of the Canadian Government and say, “Give us so much money for our rights and we will ratify the Treaty.” (*Applause.*) No; they took a higher and more manly and national view of the case; and pursued a course which contrasted most favourably with that pursued by the Canadian Government. (*Applause.*) The people of Prince Edward Island were not willing to put their loyalty into the English market and have it quoted at any figure. (*Hear, hear.*) On the contrary, they were willing to make a sacrifice for the Empire, though the Treaty did not give their agricultural interests the market in the United States which they had under the Reciprocity Treaty. A minute of Council, dated July 25, 1871, from the Lieut. Governor of Prince Edward Island to