

the British Government, through its Minister, Mr. Fox, of the authorities of this State for certain alleged proceedings on the part of the latter, in relation to the "disputed territory;" and I lose no time in complying with the request "to transmit such information as may be in the possession of the Government of Maine in relation to the acts referred to, in order that an appropriate answer may soon be returned to Mr. Fox's communication."

The first complaint is, "that the armed posse stationed by the State of Maine for the protection of the public property in the disputed territory, advancing beyond the stipulated limits, has extended its occupation of the country along the whole way from the valley of the Restook to the mouth of Fish River, into the valley of the St. John's, and thus into a portion of the Madawaska settlements."

This complaint is probably founded upon the following facts.—Early last spring, the land agent of the State sent a small force, consisting of some twenty-five men, to Fish River, to disperse a band of trespassers understood to be operating at that place. The enterprise was successful. Their camps were broken up, some of the trespassers driven off, and a few with their teams, were brought out to the settlement on the Aroostook, though subsequently released. The land agent deeming his work but half accomplished, again sent a small force, of about the same number of men as composed the first party, to the mouth of Fish River, to extend a boom across it to prevent the timber which had been cut by the trespassers being driven out into the St. John's, and to prevent further depredations by cutting. That force has remained there until the present time; and has, I believe, been signally successful in accomplishing the objects of the expedition.

This proceeding violates no stipulation ever entered into by the authorities of this State. In no proper sense can the Madawaska settlements be said to include the territory as far west as Fish River, upon either side of the St. John's, it being a distance of some twenty-five miles above it, and the two not being connected by continuous occupations or settlements. But supposing the Fish River territory to be a part of the Madawaska settlements, even then, I maintain there has been no infringement of the stipulations on the part of this State, referred to by Mr. Fox. In that arrangement, negotiated through the agency of General Scott, the right was not relinquished, on the part of this State, of going anywhere upon the disputed territory with an armed posse for the purpose of protecting the timber then recently cut and to prevent further depredations; but such right was expressly reserved, or rather the intention of exercising it was distinctly avowed.

So far as I am informed, the armed posse have confined their operations to the objects before stated, and have given no just cause of complaint, unless the prohibiting Colonel McLaughlan, the Provincial Land Agent, from driving timber down the St. John's into the province of New Brunswick, constitutes such cause. And, in regard to this, I must be permitted to say, that the authorities of Maine can see no reason for making a distinction between persons attempting to drive our timber from the State into a foreign jurisdiction, whatever may be the pretence set up.

Secondly, it is alleged "that the establishments formed by persons composing the armed parties on the banks, both of the Restook and the Fish River, had assumed an aspect and character more decidedly military and more resembling a permanent national possession of the country than could be required in the civil posse of a land agent temporarily occupying it for the sole purpose of preventing trespasses. That these establishments were fortified with entrenchments and cannon, and garrisoned by a number of armed men far greater than the occasion would warrant."

The party at Fish River as before stated, is composed of about twenty-five men,—not militia or soldiers, but hired labourers. A boom has by them been thrown across the river to stop the timber in its passage down. They have erected a blockhouse near the boom, and are armed with muskets. If this assumes "an aspect and character," in the eyes of our provincial neighbours "decidedly military," we hope it is not formidable