

Circular Address to Colonial Assemblies in relation to the Fisheries of this Colony.

The hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL, in accordance with the Resolutions reported from Committee of the Whole upon the report of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the proposed concession of Fishery Privileges to the French, presented the draft of a Circular Letter, addressed to the Speakers of the Houses of Assembly of Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island, which he handed in at the Clerk's Table, where the same was read as follows :—

*House of Assembly,
Newfoundland, 2nd March, 1857.*

SIR,—

I have the honor, by direction of the House of Assembly of this Colony, to transmit you the following Documents, involving a question which they desire to bring under the consideration of the House of Assembly of your Province.

1.—Copy of Convention between Great Britain and France, relating to Fisheries on the coasts of Newfoundland and Labrador :

2.—Copy of Secretary of State's Despatch accompanying Convention :

3.—Correspondence between H. M. Government and the several Governors of this Colony :

4.—Copy of Resolutions, and Address of Assembly protesting against said Convention.

You will observe, by a perusal of these papers, that the British Government have concluded a Convention with France, by which most important Concessions of fishing rights on the Coast of this Island and Labrador are made to the latter power. The ultimate effects of the operation of this measure, will, it is confidently believed, be the depopulation of this Colony of its British Inhabitants, and the consequent possession of Newfoundland by a Foreign Power. The French pursue the Fishery on this coast as a means only to the creation of seamen for their Navy, and the aid of the Imperial Government is freely given to carry out this national object. We prosecute the fisheries purely as a commercial speculation, by the agency of private enterprise, and have hitherto been injuriously affected by their unequal competition. Under the very extended privileges conferred by this Convention, it is the belief of our best informed