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## NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR.

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RETURN to an Address of the Honourable The House of Commons,  
dated 17 May 1849;—for,

“ COPY of EXTRACT of a REPORT, dated the 2d day of October 1848, addressed to Vice-Admiral the Earl of *Dundonald*, by Captain *G. G. Loch*, R. N., upon the FISHERIES of NEWFOUNDLAND and LABRADOR.”

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*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed, 1 June 1849.*

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COPY of a REPORT, dated the 2d day of October 1848, addressed to Vice-Admiral the Earl of *Dundonald*, by Captain *Granville G. Loch*, R. N., upon the FISHERIES of NEWFOUNDLAND and LABRADOR.

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Her Majesty's Ship “Alarm,”

St. John's, Newfoundland, 2 October 1848.

My Lord,

I SAILED from Halifax in Her Majesty's ship, under my command, on the 14th June, and anchored in the harbour of St. Pierre's the afternoon of the 17th. I found the outer roads and inner harbour filled with shipping; there were 133 French vessels, averaging from 100 to 350 and 400 tons; 100 of these were bankers, chiefly brigs, lately returned with cargoes. They had taken in their sail, and were waiting for bait (caplin), which they told me would strike into the bays of St. Peter's and Miquelon in a day or two. This prophecy (whether likely to prove true or not) was merely mentioned to deceive me, as it is well known the supply afforded round their own islands is insufficient to meet the great demand. The next morning I observed boats discharging caplin into the bankers, which I ascertained had been brought over from our own shores during the night in English boats. The bait is sold in the harbour of St. Pierre's, either by barter for piece goods, provisions, or for money.

In every way this transaction is illegal; first, by vessels trading to foreign ports without a Custom-house clearance, in violation of Act 3 & 4 Will. 4, c. 59; secondly, by sailing without registers; and, thirdly, by defrauding the colony of a branch of its revenue.

Their only excuse is, that if they were not in self-defence to sell the caplin, the French would take it, as they formerly used to do, in defiance of all remonstrances and opposition; for it is, they say, impossible to guard every particular point where the caplin may strike along so extensive a coast so as to prevent the robbery, or, in most cases, even to see the French fishermen, in consequence of the frequent and dense fogs. This traffic has now become so systemised and general, and so productive to all the parties engaged in it along the coast, that it will be a matter of great difficulty to put it down.

I waited on the Commandant, Monsieur Delecluse (Capitaine de Corvette), and, after mentioning the object of my visit, I strongly urged him to aid me in the support of the existing treaty.

He said he would, and always endeavoured to do so, in conjunction with my predecessor, but that it was an up-hill task, owing to the proximity of the island with the main, and the frequent fogs, which often enveloped all surrounding objects sometimes for many days together.

As a means of checking this great evil, I would propose establishing one or two magistrates at central positions, say Fortune, Lamalin and Burin, and supplying four swift row-boats, attached to a colonial tender, during the fishing season, and swearing in their coxswains as special constables.

Some of the local authorities entertain an idea that they cannot exercise jurisdiction over men embarked in boats; but in this I have ventured to assure them they are mistaken, and that when boats are fishing in creeks, harbours or along the coasts within three miles' distance of the land, the same law extends to the persons of the individuals in them as to a settler on the shore, and that they would be fully borne out in exercising any legitimate authority they may possess for an infringement of a local or imperial law by parties so situated.