

disregarding their earnest entreaty, consented to the ratification of the Convention of 1818, under which the inhabitants of this province have been stripped in a great measure, a second time of their natural rights.

That your petitioners have brought the remonstrance of 1813 to your Majesty's notice for the purpose of stating that thirty years experience of the evil consequences resulting from the privileges granted to the Americans, under that Treaty—so much feared and so earnestly set forth by the memorialists, have been fully realised, and that the most flagrant violations of the terms of the Convention are constantly occurring, in direct opposition to the best interests of your Majesty's subjects.

That your petitioners consider the right of fishing on the shores of the British Provinces as the natural and exclusive right of the owners of the soil. That the fisheries on our rocky shores must be regarded as the peculiar gift of a bountiful Providence, most suited to our wants, while the fertile soil and genial climate of the United States yields in abundance the most valuable productions of the earth.

That your petitioners are persuaded that, unless the fishing-grounds on the shores of these Northern Colonies, are reserved for the exclusive use of British subjects, they will cease to be of any value to your petitioners or to the British Crown. That provincial fishermen do now experience great loss from the encroachments of American fishermen, and their unwarrantable attempts to destroy our fishery, in defiance of the terms of the Convention, and it is this experience that leads your petitioners to anticipate the total destruction of this valuable branch of industry, when our rivals are permitted to pursue their unlawful practices without restraint.

That although it is understood that this grant of fishing privileges to citizens of the United States, is to form part of a mutual arrangement for the admission of certain natural productions, free of duty, into the markets of the United States and the British Colonies respectively, yet your petitioners humbly submit that the proposed concession of fisheries, (in which Canada and New Brunswick have comparatively but little interest), will lead to results of far greater magnitude than any question of exemption from duties, and they deeply regret that any such proposition should ever have been entertained.

That your petitioners are most desirous of having the commerce between the United States and the British Colonies placed on a footing of mutual advantage and reciprocity. That the existing commercial relations between them are decidedly in favour of the United States, her natural productions being for the most part received into colonial markets free of duty, and her manufactures on equal terms with those of Great Britain, while almost every article imported into the United States from the colonies, is subject to a high protective duty, to the manifest injury and loss of the colonial trader. American citizens possess the same advantage in their direct trade with Great Britain, whose immense markets are thrown open to the admission of her natural productions (with one or two exceptions) at nearly nominal duties, without any corresponding exemptions in the ports of the United States.

That Great Britain, having it in her power to redress the wrongs of the colonies, under this unequal system of commercial intercourse, by withdrawing privileges which she has so freely granted, your petitioners would humbly submit, that to concede to the United States a participation in our fisheries, in return for exemptions from duty (to which we are entitled, on the principles of reciprocal trade), could only be regarded as another mortifying proof of a readiness to comply with the demands of the American Government, however unreasonable and unjust.

That, for the reasons here given, your petitioners must remonstrate firmly and earnestly against any concession whatever being made to the United States, of the right of fishing on the shores of the province within the limits prescribed by the existing Convention; deeming such a concession not only utterly ruinous to the shore fishery of this province, but most injurious to the national welfare, and derogatory to the honour of the British Crown.

Your petitioners would therefore entreat your Most Gracious Majesty to take the premises into your consideration, and to grant to your Majesty's faithful and loyal subjects the continued enjoyment of their natural rights and privileges (which, if once conceded, will never be regained), and further, to take such prompt and decided measures at the proper season, as will effectually prevent the intrusion of American fishermen within the limits from which they are excluded by Treaty.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray,
Halifax, January 20, 1852.

No. 28.

Sir JOHN HARVEY to Earl GREY.

(No. 53.)

Government House, Halifax, February 19, 1852.
(Received March 1, 1852.)

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship, for the purpose of being laid at the foot of the Throne, the petition herewith inclosed, to which reference was made in my despatch No. 49, of the 22nd ultimo, signed by a large and highly respectable body of merchants, traders, fishermen, and others residing in Halifax and the adjoining harbours