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No. 24.

Mr. Bramston to Lord Tenterden.—(Received July 25.)

Sir,

Downing Street, July 24, 1877.

I AM directed by the Earl of Carnarvon to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant, inclosing a copy of a despatch from Mr. Ford, reporting the proceedings at the first sittings of the Halifax Fisheries Commission on the 15th and 16th June, and forwarding a copy of the Case of Her Majesty's Government, as laid before the Commission.

Lord Carnarvon concurs in the approval of Mr. Ford's proceedings which the Earl of Derby proposes to express; and I am to request that two additional copies of Mr. Ford's despatch, and of its inclosures, may be furnished to this Department, in order that they may be transmitted, officially, to the Governments of Canada and Newfoundland.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JOHN BRAMSTON.

No. 25.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Ford.

(No. 13.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 28, 1877.

I HAVE had under my consideration, in communication with Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, your despatch of the 16th ultimo, together with its inclosures; and I have to convey to you the approval of Her Majesty's Government of your proceedings at the sittings of the Fisheries Commission on the 15th and 16th June, as reported by you.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 26.

Mr. Ford to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 7.)

My Lord,

Halifax, July 26, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 9th instant, I have the honour to inclose copies of the Reply to the Answer of the United States, which I have drawn up in consultation with my Counsel.

I delivered copies of it yesterday to the Secretary of the Commission, in compliance with the second rule adopted for the procedure of the Court, and it is now in the hands of the Commissioners and the United States' Agent.

Considerable difficulty presented itself as to the manner in which to meet the contention of the United States with regard to the Headland question; and as I calculated that the United States' Answer, forwarded in my despatch of the 9th instant, could not possibly reach your Lordship before the 20th, I deemed it useless to telegraph for instructions until your Lordship should be in a position to judge of the circumstances under which the point had been raised. I therefore telegraphed on that day, having in the meantime framed the reply which I inclose in this despatch, and which I was obliged, according to the rules, to present on the 25th instant.

I should infinitely have preferred the question not having been raised *in limine* by the United States' Government; but when once it was forced upon us, I entertained no doubt in my own mind as to the proper—indeed, the only—manner in which it could be met. I felt that, in the interests of Her Majesty's Government, and of her Colonial possessions on this Continent, the only course to pursue under the circumstances was to adopt the language employed in the first section of the reply, and which your Lordship will perceive is framed so as not to commit Her Majesty's Government to any expression of opinion on abstract principles of International Law; the position taken being merely to affirm that, for the purposes of