

obtain a share in those benefits might have awakened suspicion. Was not the English Minister aware that "the Ministers of France considered the value of those fisheries, not so much in a commercial view, but as essential in providing their navy with that physical strength which would enable them to cope with other nations; that it was a maxim with the French Government that their American fisheries were of more national value in regard to navigation and power than the gold mines of Mexico would have been." Could he be ignorant of the fact that the French Government encouraged this traffic by liberal bounties, and that of late years these bounties had been considerably increased?

By the report submitted in 1851 by M. Dumas, Minister of Agriculture and Commerce, and M. Romain Desfosses, Minister of Marine and Colonies, we find that the bounties paid by France from 1841 to 1850, for the cod fishery alone, amounted to an annual average of 3,900,000 francs, which, the average number of men employed being 11,500, was 338 francs per annum for each man. Was there no reason here why the British Minister should have paused before he increased the privileges enjoyed by the French, even if this could have been done without injury to our fellow-subjects? Is the maintenance and increase of the navy of France nothing to a British Minister? If we could suppose him unable to appreciate these considerations, he had before him the report of a committee of the National Assembly upon a projected law to regulate the bounties, recommending an increase for the purpose of "stimulating the drooping energies of the fishermen, and ensuring a competent supply of able seamen for French ships of war." We copy the following extract from that report:—

"Your Commission has not thought that the encouragement granted to the fisheries can be regarded as an exclusive favour or protection to one form of industry. Unquestionably the industry exerted in the fisheries, and the commercial activity arising from it, becomes a very considerable element of employment to a numerous class; but this consideration appears to us entirely secondary, and insufficient to justify the favour of special legislation. We conceive that such industrial employments as can prosper only at the expense of the public treasury should not exist; and that the intervention of the state, in the form of aids and bounties, can be justified only by considerations of a general and public interest. It is not, therefore, a commercial law we propose, but rather a maritime law, a law conceived for the advancement of the naval power of this country; for it is in this point of view only that, in our opinion, the encouragement granted to the fisheries ought to be maintained. *It is on our fisheries that our most serious hopes of maritime enlistment repose. The fisheries give employment to a great number of men, whom a laborious navigation, under climates of extreme rigour, speedily forms to the profession of the sea. No other school can compare with this in preparing them so well, and in numbers so important, for the service of the navy.*"

The law thus recommended came into operation Jan. 1. 1852, and by its provisions each man employed in the cod fishery receives 50 francs yearly, besides a large bounty on the exportation