

BETTER MOMENTS.

BY N. P. WILLIS.

My mother's voice! how often creep  
Its accents o'er my lonely hours!  
Like healing sent on wings of sleep,  
Or dew to the unconscious flowers.  
I can forget her melting prayer  
While leaping pulses madly fly;  
But in the still, unbroken air,  
Her gentle tones come stealing by,  
And years, and sin, and manhood, flee,  
And leave me at my mother's knee.

The book of nature, and the print  
Of beauty on the whispering sea,  
Give eye to me some lineament  
Of what I have been taught to be.  
My heart is harder, and perhaps  
My manliness hath drunk up tears,  
And there's a midew in the lapse  
Of a few miserable years;  
But nature's book is even yet  
With all my mother's lessons writ.

I have been out, at eventide,  
Beneath a moonlit sky of spring,  
When earth was garnished like a bride,  
And Night had on her silver wing—  
When bursting leaves, and diamond grass,  
And waters leaping to the light,  
And all that make the pulses pass  
With wilder fleetness, thronged the night  
When all was beauty—then have I,  
With friends on whom my love is flung,  
Like Myrrh on winds of Araby,  
Gazed up where evening's lamp is hung.

And when the beautiful spirit there  
Flung over me its golden chain,  
My mother's voice came on the air,  
Like the light dropping of the rain,  
Showered on me from some silver star:  
Then, as on childhood's bended knee,  
I've poured her low and fervent prayer,  
That our eternity might be  
To rest in heaven, like stars at night,  
And tread a living path of light.

I have been on the dewy hills,  
When night was stealing from the dawn,  
And mist was on the waking rills,  
And tints were delicately drawn  
In the gray east,—when birds were waking  
With a slow murmur, in the trees,  
And melody by fits was breaking  
Upon the whisper of the breeze;—  
And this when I was forth, perchance,  
As a worn reveller from the dance;—  
And when the sun sprang gloriously  
And freely up, and hill and river  
Were catching, upon wave and tree,  
The subtle arrows from his quiver;—

I say, a voice has thrilled me then,  
Heard on the still and rushing light,  
Or creeping from the silent glen,  
Like words from the departing night,—  
Hath stricken me, and I have pressed  
On the wet grass my fevered brow,  
And, pouring forth the earliest,  
First prayer with which I learned to bow,  
Have felt my mother's spirit rush  
Upon me, as in by-past years,  
And, yielding to the blessed gush  
Of my ungovernable tears,  
Have risen up—the gay, the wild—  
As humble as a very child.

THE NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERY QUESTION.

(From the London Morning Star.)

A short time since we warned our readers of the danger of serious difficulties taking place between England and France in connection with the Newfoundland Fisheries question. We called especial attention to the fact that, altho the Newfoundland Legislature had refused to give its assent to the treaty which the Emperor Napoleon and Lord Palmerston had concocted between them, yet that the French naval commander had given notice to the inhabitants of St. George's Bay that they must cease to fish in these waters and give up to the French fishermen that monopoly which the treaty conceded to them. We stated, moreover, that it was obvious from the illegal acts that the French Government, if possible, to carry out the provisions of the now non-existent treaty, and we fastened upon the Palmerston Cabinet the responsibility of this critical state of things, seeing that they had concluded the treaty with the knowledge that it would be resisted by every man capable of exercising the faculty of reason in the colony of Newfoundland,

We publish in another column extracts from an article in which "Le Pays" has sought to refute the statements we have made. We do not feel disposed to quarrel with our contemporary's historical "resume" of the various treaties, from the treaty of Utrecht downwards, by which certain fishing rights were guaranteed to France. That is not the question in dispute. But we emphatically deny the exclusive right of the French to fish upon any portion of the Newfoundland coast, unless this right is sought to be founded on that treaty of 1857 which "Le Pays" frankly admits to have been rendered nugatory by the act of the Newfoundland Legislature. That the French possess a concurrent right with the English, and also, we may add, with the Americans, to fish upon certain well-defined portions of the Coast of Newfoundland, we unreservedly admit, and have never, indeed, sought to deny. When "Le Pays" furnishes us with the text of those treaties which confer exclusive privileges upon the French we shall be prepared to re-consider the opinions we have expressed, but our contemporary has not yet ventured to touch the question which we raised—the question of the monopoly sought to be enforced by France.

In reference to our statements that the commandes of the French station had required the inhabitants of St. George's Bay to abandon their fishing grounds, and that the French Government acted as if they had intended to take their stand upon the treaty of 1857, our contemporary first declares that this information is "completely inexact." But at the close of his article the writer unqualifiedly admits that such notice has been given, and attributes the possibility of so extraordinary a step being taken to "the loyal" nature of the relations existing between England and France. We regard this step as the reverse of being "loyal." It is, in fact, an assumption of authority which we are sure the French would be the first to repel if an analogous state of things between the two countries were to arise on their own coasts. "Le Pays" further says, it is not the treaty of 1857 which the French Government intend to execute; but the anterior treaties of 1783, 1803, 1814. And we do not find in these treaties any of those exclusive privileges which Louis Napoleon is endeavouring to obtain, and which Lord Palmerston with such suspicious willingness did his best to grant, we can only attribute our contemporary's statement to the necessity which he finds of discovering some plausible excuse for the proceedings of the French naval commander.

In the meanwhile it is stated by the Paris correspondent of an evening contemporary that the French frigate *Gesstris* has brought intelligence "of terrific rioting by the fishermen at St. John's, in consequence of supposed French encroachments on the river fishing as well as coast banks of that colony." Also that "the present officials are accused of playing into the hands of the foreigner, by putting a new and false interpretation on existing treaties." We likewise learn from the Newfoundland papers that Governor Bannerman has despatched two ships of war to St. George's Bay to ascertain the nature of the measures which the French had adopted on that part of the coast to prevent our own fishermen from following their usual occupations. It is but too evident that a deep game is being played in Newfoundland at the present time, and one which requires to be closely watched.

(From Le Pays)

The English journal, the "Morning Star," cited by a great number of organs of the foreign press, gives on the position of the Newfoundland question information completely inexact, and which it is important not to leave without a reply. It announces that the Commandant of the French station has notified to the inhabitants of this colony that they must renounce the fishery in their own waters to yield the right to French fishermen.

It adds that France intends to claim the execution of the convention recently signed at London, and inserted in the "Moniteur," though it may not have been ratified by the Legislature of Newfoundland. All these announcements are completely inexact, as will be seen by the following exposition of

the question, and of the ancient treaties.

At this epoch (1770), as since, numerous disputes took place on the subject of the right which the English arrogated to themselves of fishing in the maritime territories which belonged to us.

These difficulties were regulated in a manner favourable to us by the conventions of 1770, 1772, and 1776. Two years afterwards broke out the American war, which brought a complete perturbation into our establishment in Newfoundland. The treaty of peace, concluded at Versailles, the 3rd September, 1783, restored us the islands St. Pierre and Miguelin in full property, regulated anew the right of fishery, and extended the liberty of fishing into new proportions, and new territories, extending from Cape St. John to Cape Ray.

From the treaty of 1783 to 1789 the industry of the fishery took a new development, and acquired enormous proportions; but it was ruined by the events of 1792. The treaty of Amiens, of the 27th March, 1803, re-established things upon the ancient footing. The events which followed the peace of Amiens again put in question the fate of our establishments at Newfoundland, and it was the treaty of the 30th of May, 1814, which made them re-enter under our definite dominion.

This treaty restored us all the advantages constituted by the treaties of 1783 and 1803, and it established in substance in our favour the liberty of fishing on the coasts of Newfoundland, in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, on the coasts of the Island of Cape Breton, on the coasts of Nova Scotia, and, besides, the exclusive right of fishing in the channel between the part reserved of the south coast of Newfoundland, and the island of St. Pierre and Liguelin, as far as midchannel.

The resumption of possession of our establishments of Newfoundland took place in 1816, and from that moment our fisheries have not ceased to prosper in proportion more or less great. Such are the facts. The projected treaty re-ordained them, regulated them, extended them. The fate of this treaty is known.

The English journal to which we are replying pretends that we wish to execute it at any rate. There is a confusion on the part of this journal.

It is not the treaty projected and not ratified by the Legislature of Newfoundland that we wish to execute; it is the anterior treaties of 1783, 1803 and 1814, treaties of which several parts have never received their execution. There are bays and zones which have always been neglected, and of which we have never taken possession, and which we now claim. Our claims are so just, so equitable that they have been admitted by England. Every thing has passed in the most loyal manner on either side, and that is why, as the "Morning Star" says, it has been possible to notify to the English sailors (fishermen) that they must renounce the fishery in the zones which are exclusively reserved for us. We ask the English journal if that is not perfectly legal, perfectly just, perfectly loyal.

We do not know the line which will be taken with regard to the treaty lately prepared, but, in every case, France is perfectly justified in demanding the full and entire execution of ancient treaties.

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