

"House, and they desire to express their unanimous and unalterable determination never to give their assent to a measure so unjust."

This was followed by strong, independent and earnest Addresses from both branches of the Legislature, and by the appointment of delegates to proceed to London to oppose the carrying out of the Convention. The Speaker of the House of Assembly was authorized to communicate with the Legislatures of the neighboring colonies and ask their co-operation and assistance in the sustainment of the constitutional rights of the Colony. While the Legislature were thus prompt in the performance of their duty, the people were equally so. A mass-meeting of the people was called, at which resolutions were passed, expressing, in the most emphatic manner, their surprise and indignation at the unjustifiable concessions proposed to be made to the French, and clearly shewing that to assent to the convention would be to virtually hand over our fishing interests to the French. Delegates were also appointed by the people, to proceed to Britain to urge the Imperial authorities to refrain from putting the convention into operation, and to Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward's Island and Canada, to ask the assistance of the people of these Provinces in sustaining the constitutional principle that, as a Colony possessing Responsible Government, the coastal fisheries within the jurisdiction of the Colonial Government are the undoubted property of the people of Newfoundland, and cannot be alienated or shared with any foreign power, without the consent of the Local Legislature.

### THE LABOUCHERE DESPATCH.

These efforts were crowned with success. The convention was abandoned by the British Government, and a despatch was sent by Mr. Labouchere, Secretary of State, to the Colonial Government which has since been regarded as the Magna Charta of the Colony in relation to all questions concerning the alienation or modification of its fishery rights. The despatch is dated March 26th, 1857, and states "that the rights enjoyed by the community of Newfoundland are not to be ceded or exchanged without their consent, and that the constitutional mode of submitting measures for that consent is by laying them before the Colonial Legislature," and that the consent of the community of Newfoundland is regarded by Her Majesty's Government as the essential preliminary to any modification of their territorial or maritime rights."

### THE FORD-PENNEL ARRANGEMENT.

Since the Convention of 1857 a further arrangement has been attempted to be made between the British and French Governments in 1885, the effect of which would have been to give the French the exclusive right to all the good harbors on that part of the coast on