

stone is said by people who have heard him to have spoken at Oxford quite as well as he does now, the drawback of debating societies being that whilst they form style they produce a lack of freshness. The Liberal leader has amazing fluency and force, but has lost that freshness which was at Oxford a characteristic feature of his speaking. His speeches do not read nearly so well as those of Mr. Bright, and the latter statesman never joined a debating society. He studied oratory first by going round the country delivering one speech on temperance which he learnt by heart. He still writes his speeches, hence their freshness and the rank they take in permanent literature. But though Gladstone's speeches do not read well, he retains to the full the advantage of his early fluency, and speaks readily, whilst Bright is still not free from nervousness. He once confessed that before making an important speech his knees trembled under him. It is probable the Greek orators, like Mr. Bright, practised speaking in private. We nowhere read of Demosthenes being president of a debating society. Mr. Gladstone, most people are aware, has long had a certain repute as a connoisseur of porcelain, although, as authorities in bric-a-brac seem to be convinced, he knows nothing about art pottery, ancient or modern. But he once had a large collection, and though it was sold under the hammer at very moderate prices some time ago, the Liberal working-men of Derby evidently imagine the right hon. gentleman has not forgotten his old love, for they made him a present of a service of Crown Derby china the other day, in acknowledging which the recipient made some flattering remarks on English art pottery in general. *Apropos* of this, it will not be uninteresting to recall a story, at one time current, of Mr. Gladstone. When a younger politician, he was, as he is now, remarkable for a robust character, and entered heart and soul into whatever, for the time being, occupied his attention, whether it was statesmanship or china. His detractors set it about that he was mad, and that he had bought the whole contents of a china shop, and ordered them to be sent to his house. A friend, being asked if the alarming report of Mr. Gladstone's madness was correct, replied: "I begin to think it is. I have heard the story every season for ten years, so I think it must be true."

It is well known in Canada that Mrs. Langtry has the utmost abhorrence of the regulation hotel *menage*, and wherever practicable *en tour* lived in the palace car she travelled in. Her New York house, in west Thirteenth street, is one of the "show places" of that heterogeneous city. Of course the "Lily" has a Parisian cook; her butler is two yards and three inches in length; her coachman's and footman's livery is of white cloth, with sable capes and cuffs. Rugs presented by the Khedive of Egypt, carvings by Verbruggen, a dinner service from designs from Millais, and a silver teapot presented by her company on Christmas day, are amongst her most prized treasures.

ENGLAND'S OLDEST COLONY.—II.

(B) THE FRENCH SHORE.

THE French Shore of Newfoundland serves France in two ways. It is her basis of operations for the Bank fishery, and has a fishery of its own.

A century before Massachusetts was founded, Newfoundland was a bone of contention between France and England. The result of early disputes was that a station in the south of the island called Placentia was raised into a French colony, fortified, and a tribute of five per cent. on the value of the fish caught was paid to England. In 1675 Charles II. relinquished this with other jewels of his crown. History tells us that time and again since that date the French were expelled wholly from Newfoundland. Why, then, you may ask, have they rights there? Until the hidden workings of diplomacy shall be revealed, no such question may be answered. Our mother-land, it would seem, feels herself more at home in war than in treaty-making. In the cabinet she has prospered not much better with the French than with the Americans; in Newfoundland than in Maine or Oregon. Under Utrecht, Paris, and subsequent arrangements France has certain rights on a shore-line that stretches from Cape Ray, the south west corner of Newfoundland, north along the west coast to Cape Norman, thence south-easterly to Cape John, a distance of four hundred miles as the crow flies, but much greater if you follow the outlines of the bays. This is the French Shore.

Of what do these rights consist? They include no ownership of soil, but embrace two things. First, the right to fish within and without the three mile limit; second, the right to erect on shore rooms, stages, store-houses and such other buildings as are necessary for curing purposes and for the enjoyment of the right first mentioned. Now, to these privileges were annexed two provisos as of the essence of the grant. First, the

fishery was to be exercised not to the exclusion of His Britannic Majesty's subjects, but in common with them. Second, such erections as were set up by the French were to be removed without fail at the end of each season. The negotiators of the Treaty of Utrecht, no doubt, regarded the above as a plain arrangement and easy to work out. Abstractly reviewed, it does not bristle with complications. So long as English and French kept apart, exercised their rights as several rather than common, all went well. But when both parties, each pursuing its undoubted treaty-privileges, sought the same fishing grounds, the same heads and shoals, interference begat words, words grew to blows, blows ripened into war.

Fifty years later, that is, in 1673, the two nations sat down to make a treaty in the city of Paris. England had defeated France and had wrested from her all her American possessions north of Cape Cod. Pitt, to whom the victory was in great measure due, who knew what Newfoundland had been worth to France and England in the struggle, stood for a fishery exclusively British on these coasts. Why not? "Surrender rather," said he, "the tower of London;" but he was "defeated," to quote his words again, "not by a foreign enemy but by another enemy." The commissioners among other things, undertook to "define" French rights in Newfoundland, and, in the process, to spite their home-enemies it may be, actually enlarged them. In the first place, they gave over absolutely two islands off the south shore on one of which now stands St. Peters, the French headquarters. It is true, they annexed certain conditions and police regulations to the grant. It is true, also, that these were never carried out, that no effort was ever made to have them carried out. Looking upon them, the veriest tyro in law would see that both conditions and regulations are inconsistent with the *dominium* that had already passed. As well might the commissioners have cast salt at the tail of a comet.

But not content with surrendering the Great and Little Miquelon, they inserted in the treaty a clause prohibiting the English from interfering with the French in the prosecution of the fishery. Afterwards, preclamations were issued thereunder. Now, the French shore question in small, is this: what effect has that clause on French rights as set out in the treaty of Utrecht? There are two interpretations, for there are two opposing interests.

The French contention, as I take it, is that the prohibitory clause so enlarges their privileges that wherever and whenever monsieur chooses to fish or squat John Bull must there and then give way; that English settlement on the shore line is a direct infringement of the treaty, the shore line by custom running inland half a mile from high water mark; that, in fine, the common right of fishery which they obtained by the treaty of Utrecht was, by process of explanation in the treaty of Paris, converted into a several right, exclusively French, on the west coast of Newfoundland.

Newfoundlanders waste no love on either treaty, find in the prohibitory clause which the French quote a proviso reasserting Britain's absolute sovereignty over all Newfoundland, all rights incident thereto, exercised or exercisable there anent, and base a contention thereupon. They assert that they have, at least, an equal right of fishery with the French upon water; and that, on shore, they have and always have had superior rights. *De jure*, they are freeholders, the French but casual and temporary users; *de facto*, they have exercised the rights of freeholders. Further, they deny that in any fair interpretation, the prohibitory clause of the treaty of Paris has any other operation in the island proper than its police regulations have in Great or Little Miquelon; that is, is of no force at all.

An undertow of feeling among the English tends to the opinion that the mother country favours France more than her own children on the French-shore question. Since 1763, something, big or little, seems, at least to the eye of fear, added to the French claim every time the matter is stirred. The climax came in 1856-7 amid congratulations over the fall of Sebastapol. By a convention then drawn, England agreed to give France absolute possession of the debated coast. At the same time, she bestowed responsible government on the colony with the object, it is said, of making the concession palatable and afterwards agreeable. Not so, but the reverse of so. As the Gauls were more Roman than the Romans, Newfoundlanders are more British than the Britons. The mere taste of the bolus nauseated. Newfoundland made use of her newly acquired liberty, first, to raise a huge cry against so gratuitous a sacrifice of British power, privilege and territory. The other maritime provinces made common cause with her, and backed their elder sister up so firmly that the preposterous clauses were dropped, and herself assured that at no time thereafter would her territorial rights be infringed without her direct consent. This is the *Magna Charta* of the Island; but how does it effect the French shore question? It brings back the *statu quo* under the treaty of Paris.

One merit or demerit may be allowed that document. It has not only