

inform me of the actual state of the case, as on the result of my inquiry would depend the manner in which I should endeavour to have the subject brought before Parliament. His reply was frank and unequivocal. He stated that no change had been made, or was contemplated, in existing Treaties, nor was anything being done that would conflict with the terms of Mr. Labouchere's despatch of 1857. The two governments, he said, had agreed on the establishment of a joint Commission, whose duty it would be to inquire into and dispose of any disputes that might arise between the Fishermen of the respective Nations, and thus it was hoped that by the exercise of good sense and conciliation on the part of the Commissioners, the question would cease to be the cause of future trouble. A variety of circumstances had caused delay in bringing the matter to a close, and this he expressed regret for, as it had naturally given rise to apprehension in the minds of the people of the Colony that their rights were in peril. He added that the Colony would probably be called on to repeal the law which imposes a duty on the export of bait, though this, he thought, might properly be effected by Imperial Legislation.

With this explanation, it appeared to be unnecessary to go further than cause the Memorials to be laid before Parliament without discussion, and this was done accordingly.

It will, no doubt, be satisfactory to the Colony, to have this explicit assurance that the existing Treaties are to be upheld intact, and that no disposition is manifested to ignore the undertaking given in the despatch of Mr. Labouchere. Had an equally clear expression of the intentions of the government been given in the communications to the Colony, a good deal of trouble and anxiety might have been avoided; but it is, at all events, gratifying to be warranted in the belief that the vexed question will cease to be matter of future uneasiness or alarm.

I would observe that Mr. Bright accompanied me on one occasion to the Colonial Office, and handsomely offered to aid me if his services were required further. To that gentleman and to Mr. Brooking I have to offer my best thanks for what they did, and were willing to do, to promote the interests entrusted to me.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

A. SHEA.