

Correspondence respecting the Appointment of a Joint High Commission to consider the various Questions affecting the Relations between Great Britain and the United States of America.

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No. 1.

*Sir E. Thornton to Earl Granville.—(Received February 19.)*

(Extract.)

*Washington, February 6, 1871.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of a correspondence which has passed between Mr. Fish and myself relative to the appointment of a Joint High Commission to sit at Washington for the purpose of considering the questions which have lately arisen relative to the Canadian Fisheries, and any others which affect the relations of the United States towards Her Majesty's possessions in North America,—the so-called "Alabama" claims,—and any other claims of British subjects or citizens of the United States arising out of acts committed during the late Civil War in this country.

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Inclosure 1 in No. 1.

*Sir E. Thornton to Mr. Fish.*

Sir,

*Washington, January 26, 1871.*

IN compliance with an instruction which I have received from Earl Granville, I have the honour to state that Her Majesty's Government deem it of importance to the good relations which they are ever anxious should subsist and be strengthened between the United States and Great Britain, that a friendly and complete understanding should be come to between the two Governments as to the extent of the rights which belong to the citizens of the United States and Her Majesty's subjects respectively, with reference to the fisheries on the coasts of Her Majesty's Possessions in North America, and as to any other questions between them which affect the relations of the United States towards those Possessions.

As the consideration of these matters would, however, involve investigations of a somewhat complicated nature, and as it is very desirable that they should be thoroughly examined, I am directed by Lord Granville to propose to the Government of the United States the appointment of a Joint High Commission, which shall be composed of members to be named by each Government, shall hold its sessions at Washington, and shall treat of and discuss the mode of settling the different questions which have arisen out of the Fisheries, as well as all those which affect the relations of the United States towards Her Majesty's Possessions in North America.

I am confident that this proposal will be met by your Government in the same cordial spirit of friendship which has induced Her Majesty's Government to tender it, and I cannot doubt that in that case the result will not fail to contribute to the maintenance of the good relations between the two countries which I am convinced the Government of the United States, as well as that of Her Majesty, equally have at heart.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWARD THORNTON.

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