

No. 144.

Lord Lyons to Earl Russell.—(Received June 26.)

(No. 421.)

My Lord,

Washington, June 11, 1862.

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Lordship's despatch No. 235 of the 24th ultimo, respecting the proposal which I was directed by your Lordship to make to the Government of the United States for the appointment of a Joint British, French, and United States' Commission for the protection of the fisheries on the coast of British North America. Your Lordship now desires me to report to you whether, in my opinion, any good would be derived from the appointment of a Commission composed only of a British and American Commissioner, without the co-operation of a Commissioner on the part of France.

The object of the proposed Commission was to inquire into the injuries said to be inflicted on the fisheries by the practice of taking fish by means of set lines on the spawning banks, and to frame measures to prevent that practice, should it be found advisable to do so.

I am not sufficiently acquainted with the habits either of the fishermen or of the fish to be able to say what the effect of regulations binding on Englishmen and Americans, but not binding on Frenchmen, would have with regard to this particular mode of fishing. But in a political point of view I think it would be far from advisable, at this moment, to make, otherwise than in concert with the French Government, any arrangement with the United States in a matter in which France is in any way concerned.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 145.

Mr. Layard to Sir F. Rogers.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 24, 1862.

WITH reference to your letter of the 21st of May, I am directed by Earl Russell to transmit to you, for the information of his Grace, a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Minister at Washington,* respecting the proposed appointment of a Commission to inquire into the measures to be adopted for the protection of the fisheries on the coast of British North America.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 146.

Sir F. Rogers to Mr. Layard.—(Received August 6.)

Sir,

Downing Street, August 5, 1862.

WITH reference to your letter of the 24th ultimo, I am directed by the Duke of Newcastle to acquaint you, for the information of Earl Russell, that his Grace concurs in the opinion expressed by Lord Lyons that it would be inexpedient at the present moment in a political point of view to institute any separate action with the United States in a matter in which France is equally concerned, and he would therefore suggest that the subject of the proposed appointment of a Commission to inquire into the measures to be adopted for the protection of the fisheries on the coasts of British North America should be allowed to drop.

I am, &c.
(Signed) FREDERIC ROGERS.