the French Ambassador, M. Waddington, in a communication to the Marquis of Salisbury, dated December 12th, 1888 :—

"Mon Gouverement était donc fondé à croire, d'après ce qu précède et en conséquence de cette série d'engagements, que le droit de la France sur la côte de l'ile de Terre-Neuve réservée à ses pêcheurs n'est autre chose qu'une partie de son ancienne souveraineté sur l'île qu'elle a retenue, en cédant le sol à l'Angleterre, mais qu'elle n'a jamais ni infirmé ni aliévé. Si le droit concédé aux pêcheurs Francais a été quelquefois discuté, il l'a été dans la forme, jamais dans le fond."

"My Government was therefore justified in believing, after what precedes and in consequence of this series of engagements, that the right reserved for the fishermen of France on the Island of Newfoundland, is nothing else than a part of her old sovereignty on the island which she has retained, in giving the soil to England, but which she has neither invalidated nor alienated. If the right given to the French fishermen has been sometimes debated, it has been so merely in form, never thoroughly."

Needless to say this claim has been vigorously contested by British statesmen. Lord Salisbury replied enclosing a memorandum to which he called the French Ambassador's attention as containing "indisputable evidence that the Sovereignty of Newfoundland has from the earliest times belonged to the British crown, and that the interests of France were limited to the possession of Placentia and the temporary occupying by conquest or settlement of certain portions of the adjacent coast."