

[Enclosure No. 2.]

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir L. West.

FOREIGN OFFICE, 10th August, 1887.

SIR,—I have to inform you that a telegram has been received from the Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's Naval Forces in the Pacific, dated Victoria, British Columbia, on the 7th instant, from which it appears that an American revenue vessel had seized three more British Columbian sealing schooners when a long distance from land, and that they had been taken to Sitka. He further stated that several other vessels in sight from Sitka were being towed in.

It will be within your recollection that in the correspondence which has recently taken place in regard to the previous seizures of three British vessels by the United States revenue cruiser "Corwin," Mr. Bayard stated in a note dated the 3rd February (a copy of which accompanied your despatch No. 34 of the following day), that "without conclusion at this time of day of any questions which may be found to be involved in these cases of seizure, orders have been issued by the President's direction for the discontinuance of all pending proceedings, the discharge of the vessels referred to, and the release of all persons under arrest in connection therewith."

I request that you will at once communicate with the United States Government as to the nature of the information which has reached them in regard to these further seizures of British vessels by the United States authorities.

You will at the same time say that Her Majesty's Government had assumed, in view of the assurance conveyed to you in Mr. Bayard's note of the 3rd February last, that pending a conclusion of the discussion between the two Governments on the general question involved, no further similar seizures of British vessels would be made by order of the United States Government.

I am, &c.,

SALISBURY.

[Enclosure No. 3.]

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir L. S. West.

FOREIGN OFFICE, 10th August, 1887.

SIR,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch, No. 196, of the 12th ultimo; enclosing printed copies of the records in the United States District Court for the district of Alaska, in the cases of the British Columbian sealing schooners "Onward, Carolina and Thornton."

I should be glad if you would inform me whether the owners or masters of any of these vessels have entered an appeal against the judgments delivered by the Court, and whether, if they have not already done so, such a course is still open to them.

It is also desirable that Her Majesty's Government should be furnished with a full report of the proceedings at the trials of the masters which resulted in their conviction and sentence to imprisonment and fine.

I have further to request that you will endeavor to ascertain and report to me when it is probable that the appeals referred to in your despatches Nos. 88 and 113 of the 2nd April, 1887, and of the 6th May, 1887, respectively, of the owners of the American ships which were seized on similar grounds, will come on for hearing, and whether any arrangement has been or can now, in your opinion, advantageously be made between the owners of the British and American vessels on the one side and the Government of the United States on the other, that one of these cases should be regarded as a test case, by which, in so far as the American legal tribunals are concerned, the remaining cases might be held to be concluded.

It must, however, be clearly understood that any such arrangement, if made, would only affect the legal remedies which were open to the masters and owners of these vessels in the American courts, and would in no degree limit the right of Her Majesty's Government, after all such legal remedies were considered to be exhausted