

side, all who are prepared to resist the aggressions of superstition on the one side, and of neology on the other—of Rome and Germany—who are prepared to maintain in their integrity the principles of the English Reformation, and to uphold, with toleration, but at the same time with firmness, the distinguishing tenets of the church of our fathers.

News Department.

(From the St. John's, N.F. Telegraph, March 4.)

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE HON. ATTORNEY GENERAL AND THE BISHOP OF NEWFOUNDLAND, RELATIVE TO THE RECENT CONVENTION BETWEEN FRANCE AND GREAT BRITAIN, ON THE SUBJECT OF THE FISHERIES.

March 2, 1857.

SIR,—Having obtained the consent of the Hon. Attorney General, I should be glad to give publicity to the subjoined Correspondence between that gentleman and myself. It relates to a subject which affects (indirectly perhaps, but not remotely) the stability and prosperity of all our institutions, civil and religious, and the moral and social welfare of all our people, of every denomination and degree. Knowing that the one-sided stipulations and ruinous results of the Convention would be exposed and condemned, by persons whose judgment in such matters is entitled to far more consideration than mine, I felt it unnecessary to record my feelings and views. Having however been officially called upon to give my opinion, and given it accordingly, I am desirous that my friends in the Colony should know, that I entirely agree in the general condemnation of the Convention and the accompanying Despatch. With respect to the latter indeed, or rather with respect to both, I must be permitted to ascribe the sentiments and proceedings of Her Majesty's Ministers to ignorance of the interests involved in, and the manner and degree in which those interests would be affected by the proposed Treaty:—an ignorance partly I think, to be accounted for by conflicting reports and recommendations from this country. It is too evident however, that the continued importunities of the French (which ought in reason to have produced a more judicious result,) have procured for them such unlimited and unrequited concessions. I may be permitted to shew one instance of the adroitness of the French and the ignorance of the British Commissioners, as exhibited in the Despatch. Having reported, with great naivete, that "the French attach a value to the five reserved points on the Western Shore" (being the only Harbors with profitable fishing grounds) "on account of existing establishments and rights," the Despatch proceeds to state as a Conclusion "which it is hoped will be of increasing importance as population and industry advance," that "the Waters of the entire Western Coast, with these exceptions, are left open to the free concurrence of British fishermen:" which is as much, or as little, as to say that, with the exception of the Banks, the Waters of the entire Atlantic, "where fishing-liners hath never touched the ground," are left open to the free concurrence of British fishermen.

I am, Sir,

Your obt. servant,

ED. NEWFOUNDLAND.

To the Editor of the "Telegraph."

ST. JOHN'S, Feb. 23rd, 1857.

MY LORD,

You have doubtless been made aware through the public prints of the terms of the Treaty lately conditionally entered into by Great Britain and France on the subject of the Fisheries. Will you be kind enough to state for what length of time and in what manner you have been connected with this Colony, and to say,

1st.—What in your opinion will be the effect of the concessions made to France by this Treaty, as regards the interests of the people of Newfoundland.

2nd.—What is the value to the people of Newfoundland of the equivalents offered by the Treaty, in return for these concessions.

3rd.—Are you aware of any cultivation of the soil, or permanent erections made by the French, on the French Shore.

4th.—You are respectfully solicited to make any general observations on the subject of the Convention, though not coming within the scope of the foregoing queries.

I have the honor to be,

My Lord,

Your most obt. servant,

P. F. LITTLE.

Chairman of Select Committee.

The Right Reverend

The Lord Bishop of Newfoundland.

St. John's, Feb'y 28th, 1857.

SIR,—In reply to the enquiries contained in your letter of the 23rd inst., I beg to inform you that I have been connected with this colony, as Bishop of the Diocese of Newfoundland, thirteen years. I came into residence on the 4th July, 1844, and since that date have not been absent from the colony six months in all, except when visiting Bermuda, which is within my Episcopal jurisdiction, and I have never been absent from the colony during the summer, or fishing season. I have visited repeatedly all the harbors, (as well of what is called the French Shore as elsewhere,) in which there are any members of my congregation; I have three times visited the principal harbors on the coast of Labrador; (on which Coast I have stationed two Clergymen and have built three Churches, and am building two more;) I have had, and embraced many opportunities of ascertaining by personal observation, the condition of the inhabitants, both as to their moral and social state. I have met and conversed with the agents of all the British Mercantile Establishments; with planters and fishermen; and with the Naval Officers on this station, both French and English, (I would instance particularly Admiral Sir George Seymour.) My Clergy, as well in St. George's Bay (where also I have a Church), as on the Labrador, have been men of observation and intelligence, and I hardly need say interested in all the interests of their people and neighbors.

Relying on these sources and opportunities, I venture, at your request, to give my opinion on the probable effects of the recent convention between Great Britain and France on the subject of the Fisheries on the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador. Your first question is, "What is your opinion will be the effect of the concessions made to France by this Treaty as regards the interests of the people of Newfoundland?" If I were to answer this question generally, and speak of the concession collectively and as a whole, I should say, *very injurious if not ruinous.* They would probably double the entire amount of the French catch, which, with the help of their bounties, would enable the French at once to command the European markets, and probably in a few years, those of the West Indies and South America. They (the concessions) would seriously disturb and distress the poor "livers" (so the inhabitants are generally called, and call themselves) on the North East, North, and North Western coasts of Newfoundland, [from Cape St. John to the Bay of Islands,] and on the Labrador; and lastly would probably give occasion to much collision and strife between the French and the British fishermen, particularly in the straits of Belle Isle. . . .

I.—In the first place, while the French do not relinquish or abandon a single profitable fishing ground which they have ever used, they gain by these concessions (1) *Article 1* the exclusive right to fish at these places, never before admitted (2) *Article 3* the fisheries on both sides of Straits of Belle Isle and at Belle Isle itself, which would more than double their catch on the shore; (3) *Article 5* the right of purchasing and, if the supply should appear insufficient of taking bait on the South shore, which would greatly increase their catch on the Banks; (4) the Islands of Grois and South Belle Isle [*Article 7*].

II.—The exclusive right to the strand for fishing purposes, at the reserved harbors and all along the coast, from Rock Point to the Bay of Islands to Cape St. John [see *Articles 2* and *2*] would either drive the "livers" from the shore or would deprive them of their livelihood by interfering their Salmon, Herring, and Seal fisheries. These fisheries might be seriously interrupted, if taken away, by allowing three Frenchmen on a mile of the coast to remain through the winter; *Article 14* and by extending the time of fishing from a Summer fishery, which ought not to count before the first of May, back to the 5th of April. The Seal fishery would probably be interfered directly by the French residents, [the six in two being brought together would be sufficient to wear frame and attend to the nets, which is the manner of carrying on this very lucrative trade in the Straits on the Northern coast of Newfoundland;] and certainly be much interfered with indirectly by the increased number of fishing boats; and thus, leaving the poor British "livers" were allowed to remain:—if they were removed either by farms [see *Article 11* and *13*] or of unequal season, as would be the case, the whole of the Salmon, Seal and Herring, would of course go to the hands of the French. Nor ought it to be forgotten that if the Mackerel should return to the shores, another most lucrative branch of the fishery would be lost to Newfoundland and Great Britain. I would further observe that the exclusive right to the strand and the Harbors might interfere with the trade of timber and minerals; as well as hinder the cultivation of the soil, which is pursued with some success at Roy and at the Rivers of that name.

III.—It surely must be necessary to require proof, that to give the French a permanent right of fishing on the Labrador, would afford greater opportunities and occasion of collision, particularly while our fishermen felt that their privileges had been invaded without an equivalent, indeed any, recompense.

I must be allowed to mention one effect which would be produced on the Labrador, in the state of both the French and British fishermen, and the Labrador and the French fishermen, and the

parts in the summer, from the Heathenish practice of the French in pursuing, as they do, their fishing occupations on the Lord's day, precisely as at other times, I have myself been witness of this practice, and the French Fishermen sometimes remark, that they should not know the Sunday at all if they did not see the English "knock off." It is one of the sins which my clergy on the Labrador have laboured zealously, and I trust with success, to correct; but it would be too much to expect that they could command the same attention, with the French carrying off the Fish before their eyes.

I think it right to add that in my opinion to allow the French the right to purchase bait on the South shore, would be only too acceptable to the residents on that shore;—nor can I perceive that this right to purchase bait would be prejudicial to the general interests of Newfoundland, except so far as it would increase the French catch on the Banks. It is well known that the contraband sale of Bait, both Herring and Caplin, is carried on to a great extent, and could not easily be stopped. Some sacrifice might, I trust, be made to prevent the manifold evils of an illicit trade; but on no account should the French be permitted to take the bait for themselves.

I may proceed now to reply to your second question, namely, "What is the value to the people of Newfoundland of the equivalents offered by the Treaty in return for these concessions?" Before I give an opinion on this point I think it necessary to state that after reading Governor Hamilton's able despatch, I am confirmed in the view generally taken that the French never had any exclusive right either to the strands or fishery on the French shore. Let it be granted that "the British Sovereign is bound to take the most positive measures for preventing her subjects from interrupting in any manner by their competition the fishery of the French during the summer season;" and that, during that season, the "British fishermen can always be warned off by the French" from their fishing grounds,—that is surely a very different thing, both in logic and in fact, from stopping or interfering with their Salmon, Herring, and Seal fishery: or even their Cod fishery, where the French never cared to come. Again, granting "that the British fixed Establishments, whatever buildings or enclosures interfere with the French in curing their fish are to be removed"—that also is very different from removing all the houses of the British "livers," and preventing their occupation or cultivation of the land in no way interfering with the French fishing-rooms. If this be the just view of the case, and it appears to agree with that taken by Governor Hamilton and Mr. Crowdy in their despatch, it is difficult to perceive that the French have made any concessions or concessions at all. If it had been otherwise, that is, if the French had really any exclusive right to the fishery and the strand from Cape Ray to Cape St. John, I should be inclined to attach some considerable importance to the removal of the French from the Western coast as far as Rock Point in the Bay of Islands, as regards the comfort and welfare of the inhabitants, present or future, on that coast, but very little as regards the general prosperity of the Colony, inasmuch as all their produce goes, and would go to, and their supplies be received from Nova Scotia or Canada. And as the case now stands, I am not disposed to think that it is of no importance to the inhabitants of that shore that their rights should be recognized, and that they should be under no apprehension of being interfered with, so long as they do not interfere with the French summer fishery. But it is quite evident that the British Government, or the Secretaries of State concerned in this Convention have been misled by the misrepresentations (probably of transient summer visitors) respecting the shores of Bay St. George, as furnishing a profitable field for future colonization, and as being singularly exempt from the disadvantages of climate, &c." This is a great mistake, for I do not believe that the shores of all Bay St. George would yield such a return by the cultivation of the soil as that portion of land which would be swept by the three mile radius from the centre of Codroy Harbor; and for fishing purposes, except only at Sandy Point, they are, and would be of no value. With respect to the right granted in 1818 to the inhabitants of the United States to take fish in common with the subjects of His Britannic Majesty on the western and northern coasts of Newfoundland from Cape Ray to the Quirpon Islands, [which ought to be sufficient to prove that British subjects had such a right] it is very painful to observe that the Secretary of State can only escape from the horns of the dilemma by asserting that the rights granted to the United States were "nominal and not in fact exercisable."

In reply to your third question, viz.: "Are you aware of any cultivation of the soil or permanent erections made by the French on the French Shore?" I am not aware of any cultivation of the soil by the French beyond their summer gardens [of greens and lettuces] nor of any permanent, or other erections except for their fishing purposes. I ought, however to add that I have never visited Croque nor the Harbors on the north western coasts resorted to by the French only, as Red Island, Ferolle, &c. When last at Quirpon, [in 1853] I heard of machinery with a steam-engine, either erected, or about to be erected, for making concentrated manure from the offal.

With reference to your request that I would make "any general observations on the subject of the Convention, though not coming within the scope of the foregoing queries," I venture to remark that it seems to me a mistake to suppose that the "mutual enforcement of the rights each nation now has" [the net