

Brooking did not think my view practicable, and expressed the opinion that the matter must remain until I should be well enough to visit London myself. I have gone into all these details to show that the delay in carrying out the desires of the Assmblly in this matter was caused by circumstances I could neither control nor prevent.

It will here be well to advert to the circumstances under which the memorials were adopted by the Assembly. In March, 1857, after the rejection by the Colony of the convention between Great Britain and France, which gave additional privileges to the French on the Newfoundland Coast, the Secretary of State, (Mr. Labouchere,) in announcing that owing to that rejection the convention fell to the ground, recognised the right of the Colony in the clearest manner by stating "that the consent of the community of Newfoundland is regarded by Her Majesty's Government as the essential preliminary to any modification of their maritime or territorial rights." We believed the question of further concessions to the French to be then disposed of, but it was soon found that they continued to agitate the subject, and in 1859 an Anglo-French Commission was appointed to enquire into the operation of existing Treaties between the two countries in relation to our fisheries. This Commission spent some time in the investigation, and one of the English Commissioners was known to have been for months subsequently engaged in Paris in connection with the subject. Meanwhile, and notwithstanding the long period which had elapsed since the enquiry in Newfoundland terminated, the report of the Commission was not made known in the Colony; and no information of any kind was furnished, but that which, without explaining any thing, left the public impressed with an uneasy feeling that some injurious changes were in progress, that there would be a new Treaty, and that it would take effect without reference to the Colony. This, I think, is a tolerably correct statement of the circumstances under which the question came before the Assembly in March last. There were strong grounds for believing that the Fishery rights of the Colony were in danger, while we wanted the specific information which would accurately guide us as to the course necessary to be pursued. The Assembly felt an appeal to Parliament to be at least an act of prudent precaution, while the measure of its necessity must depend on the extent to which the facts would be found to justify our apprehensions. I therefore thought it advisable in the first instance to ascertain, if I could, what had been actually done, or what was proposed to be done, by the Government in relation to the question; and on going to London on the 11th inst., I obtained an interview with Mr. Fortesque, the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, and asked if he would