

time to replace the temporary Act. It is not to be presumed, we suppose, that future sessions would find Parliament less sensible than it now is of the necessity of enforcing regard for the Empire's obligations, and therefore no doubt need be felt that if the proposed permanent Act had not been agreed upon and enacted, when Parliament next assembled it would enact the necessary legislation to continue the enforcement of the treaties and declarations. In order that the obligations of the Empire to the French may be carried out, it cannot be necessary to enforce them in a manner both harsh and unjust to the Colony, and contrary to the well settled principles upon which British law is administered, provided the same end can be attained by some better means. The question which Newfoundland raises is not, "Shall treaty obligations be fulfilled," but shall they be enforced in a manner which inflicts unnecessary hardship upon our fellow colonists; and the point at issue is only obscured by arguing as though the measure now before the House of Lords must either be enacted by Parliament, or a similar one by the Legislature of the Colony, or the Empire's obligations abandoned.

(2.) With your Lordship we deeply regret that Her Majesty's Government should have misapprehended the nature and intention of our proposal. In the despatch from your Lordship now before us, as well as in that bearing date the 4th instant,\* you refer to our proposal as "the first proposal in the speech at the bar of the House of Lords." The only proposal we have ever made was not first made, as your Lordship will remember, to the House of Lords, but was contained in a letter sent by us to Lord Salisbury, after an interview with him and your Lordship; and our statement at the bar of the House of Lords was merely to the effect that we had made such proposal to Her Majesty's Government. On the very eve of the making of our address at the bar of the Lords, the Right Honourable the Prime Minister sent a reply in which he declared "it is not possible for us now *under any circumstances* to withdraw the Bill " which has been introduced into Parliament." Having regard to the fact (1) that our proposal was for several days before Her Majesty's Government, and rejected, (2) that after being repeated at the bar of the Lords and several days given for consideration, it was accepted, and (3) that the meaning of the proposal was not questioned during all that time, we apprehend that we were fully justified in regarding the declarations of Her Majesty's Government in the House of Lords as applying only to that temporary measure which our language unequivocally pointed to as a preliminary enactment.

(3.) We note with regret your Lordship's declaration that Her Majesty's Government will accept nothing but a permanent Bill similar to the Bill now before the House of Lords. Such a Bill we could not recommend the enactment of to the Legislature of the Colony, for by such an enactment the Legislature would merely be casting upon the Colony the duty of obeying a law at once odious and unjust, and tainted with a harshness wholly indefensible under the circumstances. If our fellow colonists must submit to coercion, it must be the coercion of a power they cannot control, and not to that of a Legislature every member of which is deeply sensible of the oppressive character of the measure which Her Majesty's Government now appears to regard as indispensable. Laws framed upon British principles our fellow colonists would be bound in conscience to obey, but laws framed in disregard of those principles, after the Colony has proven its willingness to abide by laws enforced in the ordinary manner, will not be considered binding upon their consciences, nor be capable of enforcement. If Her Majesty's Government would have regard to the extent of the coast line to be guarded (almost 700 miles) they would appreciate the fact that almost any law enacted in the Colonial Legislature would more efficiently guarantee good order than the strictest and harshest measure which the British Parliament could enact.

(4.) The course which Her Majesty's Government has deemed it wise to adopt has already had most serious results in the Colony. Before the second reading of the Bill in the House of Lords we urged that it should be deferred, but our request was refused. Before the Bill was committed, we again urged that further progress be deferred, and again our request was refused. The knowledge of these repeated refusals has so excited public feeling in the Colony that conciliatory action has been greatly imperilled. The proposal which we have made, and which when made it would have been possible to procure the adoption of by the Legislature without great friction, if it had been promptly and frankly accepted, has only been approved of after the most earnest requests by us. Those requests *have* been complied with, however, and we have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of a resolution adopted on Saturday night last by both Houses of the Legislature. This confirmation of our proposal conclusively