

No. 140.

Lord Lyons to Earl Russell.—(Received January 27.)

(No. 21.)

My Lord,

Washington, January 14, 1862.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatches No. 480 of the 14th December last, and No. 498 of the 27th of the same month, I have the honour to inform you that I mentioned to Mr. Seward three days ago that the French Government were not willing to consent to the appointment of a Joint British, American, and French Commission for inquiring into the measures to be taken for the preservation of the fish on the coasts of the British North American Provinces.

Mr. Seward asked me whether I was instructed to make any special communication to him in consequence of the refusal of France to concur in the plan.

I said that I had no special instruction on the subject, but that I concluded that Great Britain and the United States would hardly desire to adhere to the plan, since France objected to it. I had thought it right to speak to him on the matter, because I had observed that it had been recently taken up in the Senate. Mr. Seward said that he would confer about it with Mr. Sumner, the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 141.

Lord Lyons to Earl Russell.—(Received April 23.)

(No. 235.)

My Lord,

Washington, April 7, 1862.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of an Act of Congress, authorizing the appointment of a Joint Commission for the preservation of the Atlantic fisheries, and also a copy of a note which I have received from Mr. Seward, announcing the appointment of a Commission on the part of the United States.

As I had the honour to report to your Lordship in my despatch No. 31 of the 14th January last, I informed Mr. Seward on the 11th of that month, that the French Government had refused to agree to the proposal made by Great Britain for the appointment of such a Joint Commission, and I said to him that I concluded that Great Britain and the United States would hardly adhere to the plan, since France objected to it.

It would seem, however, that Mr. Seward, having already sent to Congress a request to authorize the President to appoint a Commissioner, thought it better not to recall it. On the Act being passed, I spoke to Mr. Seward again, and suggested to him that the matter should be allowed to stand over for the present. He, however, thought that it would be more regular that he should inform me officially that the Act had passed, and he has accordingly addressed to me the note of which I have inclosed a copy herein. I think it better to defer making any reply to it, until I receive instructions from your Lordships in answer to this despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Inclosure 1 in No. 141.

Laws of the United States passed at the Second Session of the Thirty-seventh Congress.

[PUBLIC.—No. 39.]

An Act for a Joint Commission for the Preservation of the Atlantic Fisheries.

BE IT enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the President of the United States is hereby authorized to appoint a Commissioner, to meet such Commissioner as may be appointed on the part of Great Britain, and also one on the part of France, together to form a Joint Commission to frame measures to protect the fisheries off the coasts of Newfoundland and