

No. 243.

Mr. Crampton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received March 21.)

(No. 54.)

My Lord,

Washington, March 6, 1854.

IN obedience to the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 33 of the 10th ultimo, I have not failed to bring under Mr. Marcy's notice the representations which have been addressed to Her Majesty's Government relative to the expediency of obtaining for British vessels the privilege of engaging in the coasting trade of the United States, in return for the permission to American vessels to engage in the coasting trade of Great Britain.

Mr. Marcy said, as far as his individual opinion went, that he concurred with me in thinking that the reciprocal throwing open of the whole of their coasting trade by both countries, would be mutually beneficial; but, he added, that he would be misleading me if he were to tell me that there was any reasonable chance of the measure being adopted by Congress at the present time. "We shall come to it," said Mr. Marcy, "I have no doubt, and perhaps sooner than is generally expected; but not now. There would be a great majority in both Houses of Congress against such a measure."

Mr. Marcy fully admitted that the constitutional objection stated in his note to me of the 1st of September last to exist, against allowing foreign vessels to engage in the voyage from the eastern ports of the Union to those on the Pacific Coast, did not apply to a proposition to throw open the whole coasting trade of the United States. All that the Constitution required was, that measures regarding trade and navigation should be applicable, without distinction, to all the States of the Union.

I have thought it my duty to address to Mr. Marcy, in writing, the proposals of Her Majesty's Government to the Government of the United States, in regard to this matter, and I have accordingly embodied them in a note, a copy of which I have the honour to inclose herewith.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JOHN F. CRAMPTON.

Inclosure in No. 243.

Mr. Crampton to Mr. Marcy.

Sir,

Washington, March 6, 1854.

IN compliance with the recommendation contained in Her Majesty's most gracious speech to both Houses of Parliament, pronounced on the 31st January, a bill has been framed and submitted to that body for opening the coasting trade of the United Kingdom to the ships of all friendly nations, thus removing the last legislative restriction upon the use of foreign shipping. Her Majesty's Government giving, as they do, full credit to the liberal and amicable expressions made use of by your predecessor and by yourself in the course of the commissions in regard to the commercial relations of Great Britain and the United States, which I have had the honour of holding with you, conclude that the time has now arrived when the Government of the United States would be willing to throw open the whole coasting trade to British subjects, in return for a like advantage to be granted by Her Majesty's Government to American citizens; and I have accordingly been instructed by Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to bring this important matter under your consideration.

I avail, &c.

(Signed) JOHN F. CRAMPTON.