

**3rd February, 1858.**

**HIS EXCELLENCY SIR ALEXANDER BANNERMAN, KNIGHT, Governor.**

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most valuable fishing and territorial privileges in this Colony, was averted : Like most evils, it was not unaccompanied by some good ; for the official declaration of Her Majesty's Government—that the consent of the people of the Colony was an essential preliminary to any modification of their territorial or maritime rights—gives us a comfortable assurance of safety in the event of any new Convention being attempted—whilst the recorded opinions of the Government and Law Advisers of England, under various administrations, and from the earliest period up to 1857, can leave no doubt as to the true construction of the Treaties now existing between England and France respecting our Fisheries.

These Treaties, and the bounties by which the Government of France supports her fishery, press upon our people with a weight which is hard to bear, and which we have no desire to see increased.

3. We entirely concur in the practical wisdom of Your Excellency's recommendation that, whilst we must not repudiate existing rights, we should avail ourselves of the means at our own control, to foster our fisheries, which constitute the staple of our trade ; the experience of other Countries enforces the suggestion of Your Excellency, that we should adopt some well considered regulations to prevent the indiscriminate capture, at improper seasons, of the various kinds of fish that frequent our Coast, and to protect and improve our important herring and salmon fisheries. The importance of such regulations is obviously enhanced by the consideration that under the well recognized principles of law, Foreigners within our jurisdiction would be bound by them equally with our own Subjects.

4. The success which a Bountiful Providence vouchsafed to the labours of our fishermen during the past Season, is a fitting subject for humble gratitude to God ; and whilst we deeply deplore the losses which our Merchants have sustained by the depreciated prices of some of our Exports, and the monetary derangement which has prevailed in all parts of the Commercial World, we console ourselves with the reflection that the stability of our Trade is unshaken, and that the healthy tone which characterizes the general Mercantile