

co-operate in any manner which may be possible with Her Majesty's Government in reaching a solution of this question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HAMILTON FISH.

No. 207.

Mr. Ford to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 10.)

(No. 9. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 9, 1876.

IN view of the probability of the American Counsel at Halifax, whenever the Fishery Commission may meet there, taking notice of and laying stress upon the admissions that were made by Canadian statesmen during the debates that were held on the Washington Treaty respectively, in the House of Commons at Ottawa in May, 1872, and in the House of Assembly at St. Johns, Newfoundland, in April, 1873, I have placed on record, for your Lordship's information, in the accompanying memorandum, certain statements on the Fishery Articles of the Treaty, which will most probably be quoted, with a view of proving, as shown by the Canadians themselves, that the fishing privileges accorded to the citizens of the United States under the Treaty, are not of greater value than those accorded to Her Britannic Majesty's subjects.

It would certainly have been preferable—and Canadian statesmen have admitted as much to me—had the debate on the Treaty of Washington been held in secret session, as was done at Washington when that Treaty was being discussed by Congress.

The debate held at Ottawa received, moreover, additional publicity, owing to its having been published in the form of a cheap pamphlet, which was widely circulated.

It should not be forgotten, however, that, whilst reading the speeches delivered by Sir John Macdonald, then Premier, and his colleagues, great allowance must be made for the peculiar circumstances under which the language and arguments employed by them were used.

Sir John Macdonald was on the point of facing a general election, and he and his party being the responsible persons, *quo ad* Canada, for the adoption of the Treaty of Washington, were naturally anxious to make out as good a case as possible, with a view, not only to defending the part they had taken in the negotiations at Washington, but of obtaining likewise a majority of the House in favour of the adoption of the Treaty.

With regard to the Fishery Articles of the Treaty, it is indisputable that both Sir John Macdonald and his followers placed a strained and exaggerated estimate on the advantages that would accrue to Canadian fishermen and the country in general by an adoption of those articles. Both he and they strove their utmost to force the Treaty through an unwilling House, in the face of strong popular prejudice, and they finally succeeded in obtaining a majority in favour of the adoption of the Treaty.

Sir John Macdonald was candid enough to state in the course of his speech that "he was laying himself open to the charge of injuring the Canadian case by discussing the advantages of the arrangement, because every word used by him might be quoted and used as evidence against the Canadians hereafter."

He was obliged, however, he said, to run the risk of his language being so used before the Commissioners as an evidence of the value of the Treaty to Canada.

Dr. Tupper, the Minister of Customs, declared that the Treaty of Washington "promoted and protected the great national industries of Canada without injuring a single interest or being counterbalanced by a single drawback."

In short, the whole tenor of the speeches delivered on the part of the Government was directed to proving that the cession to the United States of fishing privileges in British waters was no such great concession after all, and consequently the views enunciated tended to depreciate to a great extent the value of the British North American Fisheries.

In the printed volume of correspondence respecting the British North American Fisheries for 1871—73 a letter is inserted (page 10), which was addressed by Lord Lisgar to Sir Edward Thornton, in which his Lordship expresses it as his opinion that 200,000 dollars a-year would be a fair and moderate tribute for the United States to pay to Canada for having the privileges she enjoyed under the Reciprocity Treaty restored to her.

This opinion of Lord Lisgar's was based on calculations made by Dr. Tupper, and