

ment, and promised to lay the facts of the case before his Excellency the Governor.

REMARKS.

The inhabitants of any particular bay or station along the coast of Labrador have not the right or power, in my opinion, to permit the French to lay out their nets along the coasts or in their harbours, for, by so doing, the rights of other fishings are naturally interfered with, by stopping the passage of the fish along the coast, and, after fair warning, I think they should be subject to the same punishment for "aiding and abetting" as the intruders are themselves.

In my opinion it would be most advisable, nay, absolutely necessary for the prosperity of the British subjects, that magistrates should be appointed from St. John's to administer justice, and control the society resident at the various fishing stations in the Straits of Belleisle during the season.

This extensive coast, commencing from the estuary of the St. Lawrence, and stretching far north to the regions of perpetual snow, is one of the most barren and desolate in the world; and it seems that nature has removed the means of supporting human life from its surface to the waters which surround it, the abundant productions of which offer the inducement, and reward the industry and perseverance of the thousands of adventurers who resort to it from both Europe and America. The portion forming the northern boundary of the Straits of Belleisle is not so well marked or grand in feature as when it recedes from the island of Newfoundland, either to the north or south. From the sea, the country has a green and alluvial appearance, and it is not until close to it that this is lost, and nothing is seen but bare granite rocks, partially covered with moss and stunted shrubs; juniper, birch and poplar trees grow in the valleys, where the soil is of sandy clay, the temperature much higher, and the fogs less frequent than upon the coast. Here deer, bears, wolves, foxes, martins, otters, beavers, and a great variety of wild fowl take up their abode, until driven to the coast by the snowdrifts of approaching winter. The ice does not usually leave the bays free for vessels to enter before June, and it begins to form again in the shallow bays and pools in the beginning of September.

The entrance of the Strait of Belleisle between York Point and Cape Bauld is 26 miles wide, the latter point bearing from the former S. by E. At Cape Norman, 18 miles to the westward of Cape Bauld, the opposite coast of Labrador is distant only 14 miles, but the narrowest part of the Strait is at Point Amour in Forteau Bay, where it is only nine and a quarter miles wide; the western entrance of the Strait, between Greenly Island and Point Ferroll, is nearly 21 miles wide, the point bearing from the island S.S.W. The course and distance through the Strait is S. 54° W. true, or, according to the mean variation, W. $\frac{1}{4}$ S. 65 miles.

The navigation of this Strait is attended with very considerable danger, from sudden fogs, wandering icebergs, and strong irregular currents. In spring, the entrance of the Strait to the northward is frequently almost blocked up by large ice islands, which are set to the S. W., even against strong winds from that quarter; these are broken up into smaller pieces as the summer advances, and are met with throughout the entire season. It is thus apparent that the dangers of the coast are greatly increased in dark or foggy nights, during which no vessel should attempt to run, for it is impossible, under these circumstances, even with the most careful watching, to guard against unknown dangers, or to be sure of the vessel's position within 10 miles, owing to the frequent irregularity in the set of the currents. The prevailing current runs directly through the Strait to the S. W., and its rate is at times two knots, diminishing gradually in force as it spreads out in the wider parts of the Gulf; but yet its course and velocity is greatly influenced by the prevailing winds; for example, with the wind from S. W., the stream sets along the west coast of Newfoundland, from Point Ferroll past Point Rich. In short, there is no constancy either in the rate or set of these streams, for the winds and the irregular tides modify the set and rate of the equally irregular current, in a manner which it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to calculate upon with any degree of certainty. It would be prudent, therefore, on the approach of a dark or foggy night, to secure a safe anchorage, if possible; and even if a vessel bound to the Gulf, and running with an easterly wind, should find no port fit for that purpose, I would advise her standing over to the Newfoundland side of the Strait, where the sound-