

NEWFOUND-
LAND.

by which means they have secured the entire supply of their own markets as well for consumption as export, and the carrying trade connected therewith.

Your memorialists, in reference to the proposed duties on provisions and other articles imported for the use of the fisheries, would beg to observe that besides the reasons already stated, there are others not less cogent for separating Newfoundland from any general arrangement of those duties in the other North American colonies, for in those colonies the fishery is but secondary to a more permanent investment of their capital in the occupation and improvement of the soil; any event affecting their fisheries affects but a single, and that not a very extensive branch of their industry; and the disappointment, lightly felt, serves but to direct their enterprise to its legitimate object in the cultivation of the land. But the resources of Newfoundland are entirely external, and consist alone in her fisheries; she is dependant for almost everything upon foreign importation; nearly all her provisions, both salted and fresh, are imported. The great exertions which of late years have been made to introduce agriculture, have succeeded in extending it no further than to the immediate neighbourhood of the fishing settlements, from whence offal fish can be carried for manure; the growth of grain, except oats in small quantities, which when grown are for the most part cut down for fodder, is almost unknown among us; and even of potatoes, the only article of human subsistence produced in any quantity, we are forced to depend for large supplies upon England, Ireland, Scotland, and the neighbouring colonies, from whence, after all the expenses of freight and insurance, and the risks encountered from heating, sea-damage and frost, they are imported and sold in our markets at prices with which, although so much higher than in the other colonies, those grown on the spot cannot compete. Thus dependant on foreign production, we trust it will be obvious to your Lordship, that in relation to duties of importation, Newfoundland ought not to be classed with the other North American colonies, in which the great proportion of the necessaries of life are not imported, but produced.

Your Lordship's memorialists, therefore, humbly pray that the importation of foreign-caught fish into Her Majesty's colonies, may continue to be prohibited, and that provisions and other necessaries for the use of the fishery, may be imported into this island free of duty as heretofore.

20 April 1841.

(signed) *Wm. Thomas*,
President of the Chamber of Commerce.

Chamber of Commerce, St. John's, Newfoundland,

24 April 1841.

Sir,

I BEG leave to hand you a memorial from the Chamber of Commerce to Lord John Russell, with a request that his Excellency the Governor will be pleased to transmit it to the Right honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies by the packet.

The subjects of the memorial are of such vital importance to the existence of the fisheries of this colony, that the Chamber rely with confidence on the influential support of his Excellency to the prayer of the memorialists.

The Hon. James Crowdy,
Colonial Secretary,
&c. &c. &c.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Wm. Thomas*,
President of the Chamber of Commerce.

— No. 2. —

(No. 16.)

COPY of a DESPATCH, from Lord *John Russell* to the Officer administering the Government of *Newfoundland*.

Sir,

Downing-street, 8 August 1841.

I HAVE received Captain Prescott's despatch (No. 38), of the 27th April, forwarding a memorial from the Chamber of Commerce at St. John's, pointing out the injury to the trade of Newfoundland which is anticipated from the admission of foreign-caught fish into the British colonies, and from the proposed duty on provisions and other articles imported into Newfoundland for the use of the fisheries.

Having referred that despatch and the memorial which accompanied it to the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, their Lordships have informed me that they will take the same into further consideration whenever the subject to which it relates shall be again brought forward in Parliament.

I have, &c.
(signed) *J. Russell*.

No. 2.
Lord John Russell
to the Officer ad-
ministering the
Government,
8 August 1841.