

Correspondence relating to an Arrangement between Great Britain and France respecting the Newfoundland Fishery Question.

No. 1.

The RIGHT HONOURABLE the EARL OF DERBY to GOVERNOR
SIR J. H. GLOVER, G.C.M.G.

SIR,

Downing Street, June 12, 1884.

IN my Despatch, of the 18th December last,* I informed the Officer Administering the Government of Newfoundland of the appointment of Mr. Clare Ford, C.B., C.M.G., and Mr. E. B. Pennell as British Commissioners on the Commission to meet in Paris in connexion with the Newfoundland fisheries question.

These gentlemen, representing Her Majesty's Government, and M. Jagerschmidt and Captain Bigrel, acting on behalf of the Government of the French Republic, met in Paris on the 23rd January last, and the labours of the Commission were concluded at a meeting held on the 26th April, when an Arrangement was signed by the Commissioners.

I have now the honour to transmit to you a copy of that Arrangement, together with two inclosures accompanying it, which consist of a statement and map referred to in Article 2.

You will observe that the Arrangement has been entered into subject to the approval of the Governments of Great Britain and France; and Her Majesty's Government will not intimate their approval until the Colonial Government and Legislature have had an opportunity of studying its provisions, and of considering the great advantages which it affords for a settlement of the long outstanding and difficult question of the fisheries.

Before proceeding to explain the details of the present arrangement, it may be convenient to recapitulate the provisions of the treaties bearing upon the question.

They are as follows :—

By Article XIII. of the Treaty of Utrecht, 1713, it was agreed that “ The island called Newfoundland, with the adjacent islands, shall, from this time forward, belong of right wholly to Britain, and to that end the town and fortress of Placentia, and whatever other places in the said island are in the possession of the French, shall be yielded and given up within seven months from the exchange of the ratifications of this treaty, or sooner if possible, by the Most Christian King to those who have a commission from the Queen of Great Britain for that purpose. Nor shall the Most Christian King, his heirs and successors, or any of their subjects, at any time hereafter lay claim to any right to the said island and islands, or to any part of it or them. Moreover, it shall not be lawful for the subjects of France to fortify any place in the said island of Newfoundland, or to erect any buildings there, besides stages made of boards, and huts necessary and usual for drying of fish, or to resort to the said island beyond the time necessary for fishing and drying of fish. But it shall be allowed to the subjects of France to catch fish, and to dry them on land in that part only, and in no other besides that, of the said island of Newfoundland, which stretches from the place called Cape Bonavista to the northern point of the said island, and from thence running down by the western side, reaches as far as the place called Point Riche. But the island called Cape Breton, as also all others, both in the mouth of the river St. Lawrence and in the gulf of the same name, shall hereafter belong of right to the French, and the Most Christian King shall have all manner of liberty to fortify any place or places there.” And by Article V. of the Treaty of Paris, 1763, that “ The subjects of France shall have the liberty of fishing and drying, on a part of the coasts of the