

Sir Emerson Tennent wrote to the Colonial Under-Secretary of State, on the 26th October, 1865, as follows:—

"I am directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date and of your previous communication and enclosures, relative to the proposal of the Confederate Council of the British North American Colonies to despatch deputations to Washington, to the West Indies, and to various South American Countries, with a view to the improvement and extension of the commercial relations of the British North American possessions with the United States of America and the other countries.

In reply I am directed to request you to state to Mr. Secretary Cardwell that My Lords fully approve of the object which the Confederate Council appears to contemplate, and they are of opinion that Her Majesty's Government should signify its approval of the step about to be taken."

Now, Mr. Hammond wrote to the Under-Secretary of State on the 11th of November, 1865:—

"Having thus obtained grounds for further proceedings, Her Majesty's Government might in the next place consider, in communication with the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, how far any proposals might be made to foreign countries in behalf of the Colonies, consistently with the general Treaty engagements of the British Crown; and this point being satisfactorily ascertained, instructions might be framed in this country for Her Majesty's Ministers in the countries in question, and full powers issued to them by Her Majesty, under which they would endeavor to bring into the shape of international engagements such arrangements as might be ultimately considered acceptable, not only to the Colonies themselves, but also to the foreign Powers with whom they were contracted."

I will read the last part—its commencement may be understood—of another document which is extremely important. This is from a letter of Sir A. T. Galt, Minister of Finance, of Canada, who, on the 13th of November, 1865, wrote:—

"It would be improper for the Government to anticipate the action of the Legislature in reference to taxation; but it is necessary that you should be informed that this Government would be prepared to recommend to Parliament the reduction or even the abolition of any Customs duties now levied on the productions of these countries, if corresponding favor were shown to the staples of British North America in their markets."

Now, the delegation went on its mission, was well received, and promised that arrangements would be made in the direction desired, but still nothing was done. For this I will accuse no one. I should rather accuse circumstances. Confederation was accomplished shortly afterwards; and this great event absorbed the minds of all the people of this country. Then by-and-bye came deficits, and when we were having deficits it is hardly necessary for me to say that we could offer no reductions in the Tariff; but, Mr. Speaker, a new era has dawned. We have now large surpluses. We have had a surplus this year, and it looks like as if we were going to have surpluses every year. It seems to me that we cannot employ this surplus to better effect than in trying to extend our trade relations with this country—trying to get a market for all the articles which may now go abroad, and try also to find a market for other articles. I believe that the present is the time to make these endeavours, because we, if we were to say to the Government of Brazil or the Governments of the different West India Islands: "We are empowered by our Government to offer you a reduction of duties," these Governments would believe in our ability to make these arrangements, because we have a large surplus on hand. I will now read to the House a few lines which were written by the respectable and clever Consul of Brazil, Mr. W. D. Bentley:

"Sir Leonard Tilley, in his speech introducing the Budget of the present year, referred to the deputation which waited upon him in reference to some reciprocal arrangement with foreign countries. In 1879, when I was in Brazil, a law was passed at the instance of His Excellency Senhor Sinimbu, the then Prime Minister, by which the Government was authorized to make a reciprocal treaty with other countries. What was chiefly aimed at then, was an agreement with Canada, and therefore I am certain that, though the Government of Senhor Sinimbu has given place to another, yet there will be no difficulty raised on the part of Brazil to make a reciprocal arrangement with Canada, so long as it does not interfere with her existing treaties. Every one knows the enlightened views of His Majesty the Emperor, and how any proposal for the advancement of his country meets with his entire and cordial cooperation. I know he is ably supported by his

Ministers. All are fully alive to the advantages of opening up new commercial relations, and I can guarantee that when the Government of Canada approach that of Brazil, they will find the same desire on their part to bind, commercially, the two countries more closely together."

A few words more about the fishing trade of this country, because, if we are to have a large and prosperous trade with Brazil and these Islands, our fishing industry must be prosperous. As I have stated already, most of our sea fish are exported to foreign countries, and in the markets of Brazil and the West Indies we have to encounter powerful rivals. Norway is one of these. She produced 982,760 quintals of codfish in 1880; 772,420 in 1881; and in 1882, 628,680. These figures include the Finmarken fishery, which, in 1881, was only one-sixth of that of 1880, and one-fifth of that of 1881. The other principal rival is Newfoundland, which produced of dry codfish alone, in 1882, 1,173,510 quintals, valued at \$5,125,275, of which 96,395 quintals went to the British West Indies, and 471,244 to Brazil; or in all, 567,639 quintals, valued at \$2,429,062. Let me add that in those countries which are more maritime than we are, and in which the fisheries are the main element of wealth, they are more looked after and greater care is taken with them than in this country. Let me cite a report of the American consul, Mr. Holt, who has been in Gaspé for ten or twelve years, and who is well posted on the fishing trade. Mr. Holt, in the report which he made to the Government of the United States in 1880, said:

"The cod-fishery continues to be managed and controlled in the old style, but not with the prosperous results now which have attended the fish trade for a hundred years past. Since 1876 the losses have been more general than the profits to the shippers, to the extent that many of them would find their financial standing seriously affected, were it not for their reserves of accumulated gains of previous years.

"This depressing condition and prospect of the Canadian fish trade is attributed to the formidable competition of the Norwegians, who have steadily been inaugurating a system of keeping the markets of the world supplied with their fish, improved in its curing so as to be more adapted to the taste of the consumers in southern latitudes. Prices having declined, in consequence, at the ports of consignment, Canada does not appear to be able to compete profitably with Norway."

With regard to the Norway fisheries, I have had occasion several times to speak and write on that subject, and I think we cannot speak and write too much of it. I remember the time when no fish from Norway appeared on the Brazilian markets, and when the Norwegian codfish were not prepared and cured as the codfish of Gaspé and Halifax. The Norwegian codfish were dried without salt, and, as they would not keep in the warmest climates, none of them were sent to Brazil, or the warmest parts of the West Indies. But Norway, being an independent country, has consuls, the same thing, all over the world. They have a Consul-General at Quebec, with Vice-Consuls in every town of the Dominion; and in every one of the small towns of the United States; in every part of the West Indies and Brazil, and all over the world; and those Consuls are not simply literary men, they are very practical men. They have studied the markets of Brazil, and they found that the codfish from Canada sold for a higher rate and were prepared in a certain way, and their Consuls all over the coast sent reports home to their people instructing them how to cure codfish in the Gaspé and Halifax fashion. For the last ten years these people have had the advantage over us in that market, because their fish are taken three or four months before ours, and are cheaper. Now, let me read a letter which I wrote some time ago to the hon. Minister of Public Works on this very question:

OTTAWA, 31st January, 1881.

"Sir,—I have already had the honor of drawing your attention frequently to the necessity of constructing breakwaters in several of the roadsteads on the coast of Gaspesia, for the purpose of affording our fishermen necessary facilities for the prosecution of their calling—so difficult, so dangerous, and, in general, so unremunerative—with better chances of success, and to enable them to draw from the sea a larger amount, than now, of production for their labor.

"Now, it should not be forgotten that our fishermen are not the only class who will benefit by this increase of wealth, because, just in pro-