

DEBATES OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

(Continued from first page of this week's Examiner.)

Debate upon the Fishery Question.

Hon. B. DAVIES.—The Americans cannot interfere with British Government for 30 years.

Hon. B. DAVIES said that he did not state that the Americans had a right to fish within the three mile limit, but that they had a right to bring their fishing vessels into our ports for the purpose of trading, for the practice had been confirmed by the customs of years, and had not been interfered with till last August. Although the treaty of 1818 did not authorize it, yet the custom of both Great Britain and the United States had sanctioned the practice for many years past. The Americans had been trading in our ports during the last twenty or thirty years, and had never been interfered with by the British Government. The question was a very important and intricate one, and therefore he could not be in a position to give a clear opinion upon it until he had perused the despatches more carefully.

Hon. Mr. Brecken on the causes of the abrogation of Reciprocity Treaty.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL.—The hon. member for Belfast had pointed out to the members of the late Government, that the American practice of transshipping fish in our ports had prevailed for some years, and therefore should not be disallowed. That Government made a short mistake of this, and referred to the opinion of those officers who showed that the Americans had no right to bring their fishing vessels into our ports, except for the purpose of procuring wood and water, and for shelter and repairing damages. Hon. E. Palmer's opinion differed very little from that given by the Crown Law Officers. In consequence of the opinion of those officers, the then Government issued orders to their Custom House Officers, not to allow American fishing vessels to come into our harbors to trade and transship their fish, and that the Treaty of 1818 should be enforced. That was the course pursued by the hon. member for Belfast, and when he says that the Americans had the right to fish within our boundaries, he should remember that he contemned the late Government in issuing that order. But in withholding what had been said, he (Hon. Atty. General) believed that no matter what Government was in existence at that time, it would have had to pursue the very course pursued by the late Government, in reference to this matter. By the manner in which the hon. member extolled the American one, would suppose that all the narrow minded policy was on that side of the British Colonies; but that is not the fact. What Government insisted on the abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty? The United States. There was not a man in the British Provinces that did not go heart and hand for Reciprocity. When a disturbance took place in the late Government, the American Government caused every possible obstruction to prevent the passage of the British troops, and would not allow them to pass through their canal, when those troops were on their way to quell the disturbance. The Dominion Government have all along been the advocates of the policy of the United States, while the latter have held back and refused to favor it. He (Hon. Atty. General) was of opinion that the policy of the American Government towards these British Provinces was not based upon sound commercial principles. The policy of the Government was framed for the purpose of converting the people of these Colonies *volens volens* into Annexation. The people of Maine and Massachusetts to a man, tell us that they want free trade, but the politicians of the Western States who know nothing about us, declare that they want free trade, because we are British Colonies. Look at the trade advantage Great Britain gave to the United States in the repeal of her navigation laws; but these advantages are not reciprocated by the latter in one single instance. Why should our advantages to those who do not reciprocate ours? Let us hold fast to our rights and have a little patience, and it will come all right before long. There are other great questions which affect American Trade, and which will shortly come up for the consideration of this Government. The men of the Western States have no means of transporting their produce to the sea-board, and therefore will not the navigation of the river St. Lawrence. When the Alabama claims are fully settled, free trade will soon follow. Let the people of these Provinces show the Americans that they are not prepared to barter away their great privileges unless they receive equal value in return. There is no doubt that if the people of these Colonies act as every great commercial people acts, we shall have reciprocity with the United States, and it will not be at the expense of our loyalty, for we shall have all those advantages which we are entitled to as British subjects still.

Hon. B. Davies cites opinion of Hon. E. Palmer.

Hon. B. DAVIES thought the Despatches should be allowed to lie for short time upon the table, in order that hon. members should have time to look into them. He thought the efforts put forth last summer to prevent American Fishermen from landing fish and purchasing supplies were unjustified, for, and that the conduct of Captain Hardinge was, in many respects, quite unjustifiable. If they were to obtain free trade with the United States it would not be brought about by any puny attempts of the Dominion Government or themselves to force the American Government into it. If (Hon. B. D.) understood the learned Attorney General correctly, he cast a reflection upon the late Government.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL.—Oh! No, nothing of the kind.

Hon. B. DAVIES understood that the Americans, on the payment of the same license fee as their own fishermen, were entitled to the privileges of fishing in their waters. The Leader of the Government at the time opened a communication with the Canadian Government to ascertain the course which the Dominion intended to adopt with respect to the granting of licenses, and was not led to believe in so far as he (Hon. B. D.) was aware, that there would be any other course pursued than that which had been adopted in former years. Nor did he think that Capt. Hardinge had authority for the course he took. The opinion of the Hon. Edward Palmer was obtained, and he said: "The only power given to seize and confiscate is in cases where he found on board such vessel any goods prohibited to be imported into this Island, and to construct this Act as giving power to seize and confiscate a vessel for the alleged breach in question, the same not being expressly authorized by the Act itself, and still less by the provision of the convention, would in my opinion be an unjustifiable assumption of power by the party who would attempt to

exercise it." And although the treaty of 1818 might be interpreted to justify what Captain Hardinge did, yet the long continued practice had rendered its strict application an absolute, and they should not have been enforced without due notice of such intention having been first given.

Speech of Hon. G. W. Howland, and remarks of Hon. Mr. Sinclair.

Hon. Mr. HOWLAND thought it rather singular to hear the hon. member giving utterance to such statements. The American Fishermen were aware of the course intended to be pursued, and had been duly informed thereof by the American Government, as the following circular relating to Canadian inshore fisheries proved, an extract from which he would read.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, June 9th, 1871.

SIR,

In compliance with the request of the Secretary of the State, you are hereby authorized and directed to inform all masters of fishing vessels at the time of clearance from your port, that the authorities of the Dominion of Canada have terminated the system of granting fishing licenses to foreign vessels under which they have heretofore been permitted to fish within the maritime jurisdiction of the said Dominion, that is to say, within three marine miles of the shores thereof, and that all fishermen of the United States are prohibited from the use of such inshore fisheries, except so far as stipulated in the first article of the Treaty of October 20, 1818, between the United States and Great Britain, in virtue of which the fishermen of the United States have, in common with the subjects of Her Britannic Majesty, the liberty to take fish of every kind on that part of the Southern coast of Newfoundland which extends from Cape Ray to the Rameau Islands on the Western and Northern coast of Newfoundland, from the said Cape Ray to the Quinlan Islands, on the shores of the Magdalen Islands, and also on the coasts, bays, harbors, and creeks, from Mount Joly, which was, when the Treaty was signed, on the Southern coast of Labrador, to and through the Straits of Bellefleur, and thence northwardly indefinitely along the coast, without prejudice, however, to any exclusive rights of the Hudson's Bay Company; and have liberty forever to dry and cure fish in any of the unsettled bays, harbors, and creeks of the southern part of the coast of Newfoundland, and also described, and of the coast of Labrador, unless the same or any portion thereof, be settled, in which case it is not lawful for the said fishermen to dry or cure fish at such portion so settled, without previous agreement for such purpose with the inhabitants, proprietors, or possessors of the ground; and also are admitted to enter other bays or harbors, for the purpose of shelter and of repairing damages therein, of purchasing wood, and of obtaining water, and for no other purpose whatever, subject to such restrictions, as may be necessary to prevent their taking, drying, or curing fish therein, or in any other manner whatever, abusing the privileges hereby reserved to them.

(Signed) Geo. H. BOYD WELLS, Secretary of the Treasury.

So that it was quite clear that the American fishermen were not taken by surprise, but were made fully aware by their own Government that the Treaty stipulations of 1818 would be enforced. In the first article of which he found the following:—"And the United States renounces for ever any liberty heretofore enjoyed or claimed by the inhabitants thereof, to take, dry, or cure fish, on or within three miles of any of the coasts, bays, creeks, or harbors of His Britannic Majesty's Dominions in America, not included within the above mentioned limits; provided, however, that the American fishermen shall be admitted to enter such bays or harbors, for the purpose of shelter and of repairing damages therein, of purchasing wood, and of obtaining water, and for no other purpose whatever. But they shall be under such restrictions as may be necessary to prevent their taking, drying, or curing fish therein, or in any manner whatever, abusing the privileges hereby reserved to them." He would be as much pleased as any one to see the Americans trading with their people and participating in the advantages of our fisheries provided their Government gave an equivalent for those privileges. But so long as the British Empire remained a dependency of the British Empire, it was their duty to give ready obedience to all the just demands of the parent state. And had the Government of this acted otherwise than it did, it might have precipitated a state of affairs and events which he was sure that Committee would not wish to see brought about.

Hon. P. Sinclair admitted that the American fishermen had the notice given them which the hon. member mentioned, but thought they were not aware that the trade restrictions were to have been enforced in the way they had. And thought the President of the United States had good reason for saying that the course pursued by the Canadian authorities towards the fishermen of the United States during the past year had not been marked with a friendly feeling.

Hon. Mr. HOWLAND said the American fishermen knew what their duty was quite well. He (Hon. Mr. H.) had been on board one of which had clearly satisfied him that the American Government did not wish their fishermen to assume any privileges except those granted to them by Treaty, and believed also, that all the American fishermen ran if they did so.

Hon. J. C. Pope.—This Island should not surrender Inshore fisheries.

Hon. LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT said whether they had notice or not, the American people were sharp enough to know their own position. The Administrator of the Government had last summer a duty to perform which, in common with the hon. member for Belfast, who was also a sworn member of the Cabinet, he had to give attention to when Captain Hardinge, acting under Imperial authority drew his attention to it. Whether that officer showed sharp practice or not in the case of Captain Marshall and others, it was clear that he had the Treaty and law on his side. When American citizens came among them to do business, and were by the laws and customs of the country dealt kindly with, it was their duty strictly to observe the laws of this country, and if they had suffered loss, they had none to blame but themselves. If those gentlemen were not satisfied with the laws of the Colony and wished to avoid the responsibility they imposed they should have left the country. If Great Britain should have to pay the United States any claims on account of the Alabama depredations during the late Civil War in the United States, she was perfectly able to do so, nor should he (Hon. J. C.) ever consent that for any such claims that this

Island should be called upon to surrender the privileges of its inshore fisheries. He would rather pen a resolution to the effect that our fishermen should never be surrendered in lieu of any such claims. It was a mistake to suppose that Reciprocity would be the result of the settlement of that question. Their duty was to hold on to their inshore fisheries which was the only privilege left that had not clearly been wrested from them.

House resumed, when Committee reported progress. Adjourned until ten o'clock to-morrow.

G.

THURSDAY, March 2nd.

Privileges and Elections.

House in Committee of Privileges and Elections. Further consideration of Petition of Thomas W. Dood, Esq., and others, against the return of Hon. Daniel Davies.

Hon. Mr. PERRY in the Chair.

Progress reported.

House adjourned until to-morrow at ten o'clock.

FRIDAY, March 3rd.

House in Committee of Privileges and Elections to take into consideration the Petition of John Gaffney and others, against the return of Mr. John A. McDonald as a Member of the House for the Third Electoral District of Prince County.

Hon. Mr. PERRY in the Chair.

After some time spent in Committee, the Speaker took the Chair, and the Chairman reported that the Committee had come to two Resolutions, which were again severally read and agreed to, and are as follows:—

1. The Committee of the whole House on Privileges and Elections having under their consideration the petition of John Gaffney, Esq., and others, Electors of the Third Electoral District of Prince County, complaining of the undue return of John A. McDonald, Esq., as one of the Members for the said District, after hearing learned counsel for the petitioning candidate and the sitting member, are of opinion that the said John A. McDonald is entitled to retain his seat, as a Member for the said Third Electoral District of Prince County. Therefore Resolved, That the petitioners be forth to the petition of the said John Gaffney are not, in the opinion of this Committee sufficient to warrant this House in granting the prayer of his said petition.

2. Resolved, That it is the opinion of this Committee, that the petition of John Gaffney, Esq., a candidate at the late Election for the Third Electoral District of Prince County, against the return of John A. McDonald, Esq., is neither frivolous nor vexatious.

The Thirteenth Standing Rule of the House was suspended to allow the introduction of a Bill. The Hon. Attorney General presented a Bill to amend the Act relating to the terms of and proceedings in the Supreme Court of this Island.

Received and read a first time.

The Tenth Rule of the House was then suspended, and the Bill was read a second time, and ordered to be committed to a Committee of the whole House at the afternoon sitting.

House adjourned for one hour.

I. O.

Several Bills having been read a third time and sent up to the Legislative Council, the House went into Committee on the message of His Honor the Lieut. Governor accompanying the Despatches on the Fisheries.

Mr. A. C. McDonald in the Chair.

Fishery Debate continued. Speech of Hon. B. Davies.

Hon. B. DAVIES said when the Question was under consideration a few evenings before, he had asked for time to give the Despatches a more careful perusal, to which request the Hon. Leader of the Government was kind enough to accede. He had looked over those Despatches, but was not certain that all which had taken place last summer was correctly detailed there. He (Hon. B. D.) considered that Captain Hardinge had assumed an authority to which he was not entitled, and which it was not their duty to assume. He would admit that it was his duty to prevent foreigners from encroaching upon their fisheries, and fully agreed with the Hon. Leader of the Government that it was the duty of the Administrator and Government to give respectful consideration to any representations which might be made there by any British commander entrusted with the duty of protecting those rights. But when that officer entered the harbor of Charlottetown, boarding Colonial vessels engaged in trading several' of which he detained in custody, interfering with the public officers, acting under the authority of the Government of this Colony, he felt that he had exceeded both his duty and instructions, and that he insulted our officers and Government by such actions. He (Hon. Mr. D.) felt desirous of knowing if there was anything in the Despatches which justified such conduct, and was glad that there was not. The officers of Her Majesty's Offices of Customs and Excise had, alone, a right to receive the papers of ships entering their ports, to permit the lading of their cargoes, and granting them their clearances. But when Capt. Hardinge came into that harbor, boarded vessels, examined their papers, and endeavored to interfere with the Collector of Customs in Charlottetown in his office, he certainly exceeded his duty and authority, and Mr. Clark deserved the thanks of that hon. Committee for telling Capt. Hardinge that he was not a subordinate of his, nor had been placed under his jurisdiction. Mr. Clark's public spirit was such as they should feel proud of. It was true that in some sense the Government was bound according to Treaty to prevent American vessels from landing their cargoes of fish, yet such had been allowed for so long a time, he believed that they were not generally aware that a custom which had been so long in practice was then to be prohibited; but Capt. Hardinge and the Canadian policy ruled the Colony. Capt. Hardinge not having any mode whereby he could deputize authority had recourse to the extraordinary method of prohibiting American Fishermen from landing their cargo of fish and thereby preventing them from being shipped in bond to the United States. The Government, as it was its duty, had to bring the matter to the notice of Her Majesty's

Cabinet, which immediately ordered the restrictions to be removed, which proved most conclusively that Capt. Hardinge had no authority for interfering to the extent he did. Why, gentlemen, in the country had no idea of what was being done in the Port of Charlottetown, when an officer of Her Majesty's Navy voluntarily acted as Harbor police for that port. He (Hon. B. Davies) felt that that officer was lowering himself in the opinion of all intelligent men to such an extent that he (Hon. B. D.) felt ashamed of himself as an officer of the Government of which he was a member. But felt proud to think the British Government had directly rebuked such conduct, and the Despatch before them showed him (Hon. B. D.) that the course which the Government then pursued was wise, and as a native of the country, he was glad their policy had been approved of by the Imperial Authorities. The Admiralty, he felt certain, never intended that one of their officers should act as Capt. Hardinge had done, who seemed to think that the duties he had to discharge in connection with the protection of the Fisheries in the Gulf of St. Lawrence was wholly confined to the waters between the entrance and head of the Hillsborough. Such, however, was not the place which he was commissioned to protect or guard, but on the outside shores of the Gulf, to see that no infractions were made upon the stipulations of the Treaty, in the taking of fish within the three miles limit. They all knew there was a dispute respecting the interpretation of the three line limit, but no American vessels had ever attempted to fish in the Hillsborough. Her Majesty's Government, however, had not hitherto placed much value upon the fisheries of the Gulf, and as it had allowed P. E. Island to be deprived of its Public Lands, Quit Rents, and Fishery Reserves, it did not seem to him probable that Her Majesty's Commissioners then sitting in Washington would put a greater value upon their Fisheries than the Home Government had upon the other public rights of this Colony. There was another matter to which he wished to refer. He (Hon. B. D.) had been called an Annexationist which was not correct; he was free to admit that he approved of Republican sentiments, but that was quite different from being an Annexationist. The Republican Party in England was the Liberal Party. (No No.) While hon. members might say no, he (Hon. B. D.) would maintain that what he said was quite constitutional. If the Republican, Liberal, or Democratic Party formed a majority in the Imperial Parliament it would become the governing power, in the same way as the Tories or Whigs did. There was no prohibition to any party under the British Constitution in attaining to power. On the contrary it was considered one of its strongest bulwarks against the oppressions of revolutionists. While he advocated Republican principles he felt that he was perfectly right as a British subject in doing so. Her Majesty did not care what the opinions of any party were, so long as they did not infringe upon the rights of the Crown or the Constitution, which those entertaining his sentiments never did. He believed that those principles were better carried out in England than they were in the United States; and offered those remarks lest his views might be misunderstood, or that people might think he was in favor of Annexation when he was not, nor should his views be so understood.

Treaty had not injured the Colony to any material extent, yet if it was renewed it would benefit many, especially small traders, while it might perhaps tend to some extent to repopulate their people somewhat every year. Since that Treaty had been repealed their oats had brought higher prices than they did before, and he did not know but they were as well off as if it had not been repealed. The farmers had learned wisdom by it, and fed their produce to their stock, which was of more advantage to them than selling off their grain for potatoes. &c. It had been said that Queen's and Prince Counties were more prosperous than King's County. The reason was obvious. Queen's and Prince Counties had always better facilities for the shipment of produce than King's, and the result was seen in their more advanced condition. It might be said that King's County had steam communication with Nova Scotia, which was true. But that was not in the line of trade that was of most advantage to them. If, however, the railway should be built direct from Summerside, which is in easy reach of the best markets within reach of the people at large of this Island, (applause.)

Hon. D. Davies Disposed to let Americans fish in our waters.

Hon. D. DAVIES would endeavor to confine his remarks to the despatch, and would not hesitate to say that he thought also that the British commander to whom reference had been made, had exceeded his authority, when he would not allow fish to pass through in bond to the United States. He considered it a hardship at the time, and thought so still. Why should not fish have been allowed to pass through as well as goods? Such a procedure was not only injurious to the merchants, and those engaged in the fisheries, but carried on its face a hardship which there was good reason to complain about. He (Hon. D. D.) did not know that the deep sea fisheries could ever be profitably carried on by the people of this Island, as vessels owned here could only be employed a part of the year. The most profitable fishing was that which was carried on in small boats. Now did he think the fisheries would ever be very generally or successfully carried on in this Island until the lands were all taken up and improved. For his part, he felt disposed to let the Americans make the best use of the fisheries they could. Their fisheries spent money among the farmers and traders of the colony. Meantime, he looked forward to some seeing all such matters being placed in that pleasant position they had hitherto been in.

Hon. E. McEachen defends action of Capt. Hardinge.

Hon. Mr. McEACHEN thought Captain Hardinge had been rather severely dealt with by some hon. gentlemen. That officer had simply pointed out some of the provisions of the Treaty of 1818, which were being disregarded by American citizens, and His Honor the Administrator of the Government and his advisers, consulted with the Crown Law Officers respecting those infractions, and those gentlemen said that the charges preferred by that officer were correct; and, as a convincing proof of the correctness of that opinion, it was found that the Government had no power to interfere in the matter, until it had been submitted to the Imperial Government for its direction thereon. Of course, until an answer was received, the British Commander here, who had been commissioned to those waters to look after those matters, had to retain in his own hand their management until the pleasure of the British Government was known. Therefore he thought it wrong to ensure that officer when he only did his duty.

Hon. P. Sinclair on bringing down portions of Despatches.

Hon. P. SINCLAIR said that, while he had no objection to the Resolution, yet he thought it was not fair to bring down extracts from a Despatch, and ask that hon. Committee to give a reply thereto. He could not look upon them other than as garbled extracts. The Despatch from which they had been taken was obviously an important one, yet it was quite clear that that part of it which bore directly upon the real question had been withheld. He did not see why the Government had done so, for he did not believe that any despatches came out, a part of which was public, and the remainder private; and therefore he believed, when the Government brought a part of that one down, they should have brought the whole of it; not doing so was, in his view of the matter, taking an undue advantage of the opposition. With respect to the information asked by the hon. member for Georgetown, (Mr. Munro) he might say that the orders received originated with the Dominion Government, but came to them through the Imperial authorities. When so brought to the notice of the Government, it had to put an immediate stop to the practice complained of, or put up with the consequences which might ensue. He would reiterate his statement by saying, he thought it wrong for the Leader of the Government to put the House into a Committee of the whole, to ask our answer to portions of any despatch. He never heard or saw the like before.

Reply of Hon. J. C. Pope.

Hon. LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT was surprised at the statements of the hon. member for New London, who knew quite well that although but a part of a despatch had been submitted, yet the extracts were not garbled. All that was really necessary to produce had been submitted. It was more than the Lieutenant Governor dared, to have allowed more to have been sent down, without leave from the British Government. There was a Commission then sitting in Washington, and the reason why the opinion of that hon. Committee was sought at that particular time was, that an expression of the opinion of the representatives of the people of this Island might be had on the matter submitted, in order that it might be laid before the Commission as early as possible. Canada and Nova Scotia had agreed to strong Resolutions on the subject, and it was important that they should express an opinion also. He thought he would have to regard the hon. member for Belfast as the Leader of the opposition,

for he came to the forefront of the conflict without hesitation, while the hon. member for New London kept quiet, and when his hon. friend had well opened up the Ball, he got up, and gave Scotchman-like, delivered a shrewd speech. (Laughter.) When the hon. member for Belfast said that Captain Hardinge attempted to interfere with the Collector of Customs, in his office, he (Hon. Leader of the Government) thought the hon. member must have been misinformed. The Custom House officer had a perfect right to prohibit any interference with him in the duties of his office, and it he (Hon. Leader of the Gov't) was an officer of the Government, and Captain Hardinge came to interfere with him in the discharge of his duties, he would very soon tell him that he knew nothing about him, and that he was only answerable for his conduct to the Government from which he had received his appointment. But when an officer comes to this Island, commissioned by the British Government to enforce the observance of Treaties, and observed that some of its provisions were violated, any assistance or information asked for by that officer to aid him in the discharge of his duty had to be given, but he had no right to interfere with any officer of the Colonial Government, or in the least to presume to exercise authority over him. When Her Majesty's Government received the information communicated, the prohibition was removed, and as the Resolution merely approved the policy pursued by the late Government, he thought it should pass unanimously. If free trade was to be obtained, it would not be by yielding up such a valuable source of wealth as their fisheries, unless an equivalent equal in value, was received in return. These fisheries were the most valuable in America, — he had almost said in the world — and they should not consent to their surrender for any claims which the United States Government might prefer against Great Britain.

Hon. Mr. DUNNAN in favor of retaining Inshore Fisheries.

Hon. Mr. DUNNAN.—Mr. Chairman, I approve of the Resolution as amended, and I cheerfully express my opinion, that no fault can be found with the late Government for their action last summer. They could do no more than they did, and it would have been bad policy indeed if they had attempted to interfere with officers of the Imperial Government, acting under the orders of that Government. While I admit as frankly as any hon. member, that our trade with the United States, as carried on, was of great benefit to the people of the Island, I am by no means desirous to have a one-sided free trade. I hope we shall retain our inshore fisheries; they are all that is left to us as a people, and I have no idea of giving them up, and getting nothing in return. Last summer Captain Hardinge, of H. M. S. "Valerius" acted under instructions from the Vice Admiral of the Station, and perhaps, in some cases, put a too stringent construction upon his orders, but it is hard to blame him as severely as has been done. I am not sure that I would object to Government fitting out a cutter, or admitting those of the Dominion to our waters for the protection of our inshore fisheries. Such a course would, at least, manifest a disposition on our part to do something towards the preservation of our rights. I second the resolution, as amended.

Hon. Benj. Davies.—Despatches should be furnished entire, unless for the protection of British interests.

Hon. B. DAVIES.—As to the reference made by the Hon. Leader of the Government to the expression used by the hon. member from New London (Hon. Mr. Sinclair) about "garbled despatches," he only meant to say that, not the whole document, but only extracts from it had been sent down. He did not intend to convey the idea that the extracts had been "garbled"; and I contend that the whole despatch might materially modify the meaning to be gleaned from the portions of it which alone are before us. It is the duty of the Government to submit to the House all despatches received from the Imperial Government, and I cannot conceive that the despatch referred to is of so private and confidential a nature as to justify the Government in withholding any part of it. I admit, that if the parts withheld from the House, have reference to the International Commission sitting at Washington, it might be necessary for the protection of British interests that they should not be made public.

Speech of E. Reilly, Esq.

Mr. REILLY.—It is to be assumed, Mr. Chairman, that we are all actuated by a desire to promote the best interests of the country, and it is but natural that differences of opinion should exist as to the best mode of doing so. The resolution, as originally introduced is, in my opinion, calculated to do more harm than good, and I shall feel it my duty to oppose it, if it be not amended. After the convention of 1818, Americans were allowed the privilege of entering our ports, and landing and transshipping their fish. That privilege was taken away last year. I think that if we take tolerably high ground on this question, we will be likely to strengthen the hands of the Commissioners at Washington. If the prohibitory clauses of the Convention had not been enforced last year, the subject would not have been referred to in the Message of the President of the United States to Congress, nor would there have been any Correspondence on the subject between the American and British Governments. True, we are a small population, but if we manfully assert our rights, more numbers will not prevent our obtaining them. In the preparation of the Convention of 1818, the British Government was outwitted through ignorance of the value of the Gulf fisheries. Had that been known, American fishermen would have been excluded from our waters. The system of licensing American fishing vessels, realized but little to the Treasury of the Island. The Americans fished where they pleased, and in one year the license fees paid here amounted to no more than £4. We know

Various small advertisements and notices on the left margin, including mentions of 'The Examiner', 'Medical Board', 'Jurisprudence', 'Books', 'Shoes', 'Caps', 'Flour', 'Wells', 'Kenzie', etc.