

WASHINGTON, D. C., February 22, 1888.

The Honorable THOS. F. BAYARD,

*Secretary of State.*

SIR: In the event that the English or Dominion government should attempt to justify the invasion of Behring Sea by English or Canadian seal hunters, in violation of the laws of the United States and the regulations of the Treasury Department, by virtue of the privileges stipulated in the first article of the treaty of 1825, between England and Russia, I beg to submit the following for your consideration :

I.

The contention between England and Russia and between the United States and Russia had reference to that section of the North Pacific coast situate between parallel 51° N. latitude and the 141st meridian.

On the 51st parallel the ocean, according to Mr. Adams, is four thousand miles wide, and the claim of *mare clausum* was for that reason repelled by Mr. Adams. The right of trading on that coast was claimed by the United States and England and denied by Russia, and to settle this contention was the object of the conventions of 1824 and 1825.

Russia's jurisdiction as far south as the 55th parallel, however, was conceded, and her title to the chain of Aleutian islands was not then and never has been questioned, notwithstanding the fact that this chain of islands is situated far south of the 55th parallel.

There had been no conflict or controversy in reference to any part of the Russian possessions west of the 141st meridian; and in the treaties of 1824 and 1825 there is no reference to any portion of the territory claimed by Russia, west of said meridian or north of Mount St. Elias; so that, after these treaties had been ratified and the contention adjusted, the juris-