

THE BEHRING SEA CONTROVERSY.

CHAPTER I.

SEIZURES AND NEGOTIATIONS.

To "a sea which lies far beyond the line of trade, whose silent waters were never cloven by a commercial prow, whose uninhabited shores have no port of entry and could never be approached on a lawful errand under any other flag than that of the United States,"¹ our eyes, in these pages, will be turned. Here is the summer home of the seal,—the last and greatest seal rookery of the world. "Into this peaceful and secluded field of labor, whose benefits were so equitably shared by the native Aleuts of the Pribylov Islands, by the United States, and by England, certain Canadian vessels in 1886 asserted their right to enter, and by their ruthless course to destroy the fisheries and with them to destroy also the resulting industries which are so valuable. The Government of the United States at once proceeded to check this movement, which, unchecked, was sure to do great and irreparable harm. * * *

¹ Let. Mr. Blaine to Sir Julian Pauncefote, Dec. 17, 1890-1891. This and the succeeding references to which 1891 is added, refer to the President's message of Jan. 5, 1891, 51st Cong., 2d Sess., House of Representatives Ex. Doc., No. 144.