

business was entrusted to a gentleman of high connections, who I dare say enjoyed a pleasant trip. No obstruction was put in the way of access to the books or to any other sources of information; on the contrary, every facility was offered. I refer for confirmation of this fact to the letters of Mr. Seward (Miscellaneous Ev. of U. S., pp. 9, 10). The result was that some useful evidence was obtained for the Claimants. I cannot omit here to thank the learned counsel for relieving the dreariness of this discussion by his page of elaborate drollery about mother country, old gentlemen with quills behind their ears, and all the rest of it. The Commissioners cannot fail to appreciate the little story, for it is not only droll, but has the virtue (rare in comic stories) of being about as veracious and as good a substitute for just reasoning, as most of the graver portions of the argument.

The manner in which the counsel for the United States takes leave of Mr. Mactavish (pp. 95, 96), is so plaintive that I must invite for it special attention. After being foiled, as he himself states, in all his super-lawyer-like struggles to compel this devoted witness to prove a fact which did not exist, and to involve him in self-contradiction, he retires from the field of his discomfiture under cover of the portentous question (962), in which he requires the witness to produce *there* "*all accounts, account books, and letter books which were kept at the various Posts of the Company south of the 49th parallel of north latitude during their occupation.*" Now this occupation, be it known, covered some forty years in time. The number of the Posts was at least fourteen. It is not too much to say therefore that the books must have amounted to some thousands of volumes. It is no wonder that the witness, bewildered by such a wild and monstrous demand as this, should have declared his utter inability to say what he would do. If he had said no, there would have been a half or perhaps a whole dozen of pages denouncing the Company in the most indignant terms for suppressing evidence; if—and I tremble while I write it—he had said yes, the mere getting of these books from their places into the chambers of this Commission, if that had been possible, would have occupied I know not what measure of time and money; and when this great feat had been achieved, the invaluable life of the learned counsel might have been ingloriously consumed in poring