

make. Sir, on the 1st of April or thereabouts we shall probably have to hear from the mouth of the present Minister of Finance what arrant charlatans and imposters all his predecessors were in making the promises they did to the people of Canada, how utterly and gross a failure in every imaginable point and part has been this same National Policy, and how totally they have failed to redeem every pledge and promise they made. Sir, the hon. gentleman is not particularly fortunate in his allusion to the remarks made by my hon. friend on the increase of English commerce with Canada. Does the House want to know what all this flourish of trumpets is about? Well, Sir, according to the Trade and Navigation returns, which I hold in my hand, our total trade with England amounted in the year 1892 to \$106,254,000, and in the year just closed to \$107,238,000. The increase, therefore, on the total trade was rather less than one per cent. Turning to our exports, I find that we exported to England in 1892 \$64,906,000, and in the year just past \$64,080,000; in other words, our exports to England were nearly one million less last year than they were the year before. I do not think, Sir, that that is a very great increase, and I cannot think that it is worth a paragraph in the Queen's speech. However, Sir, the hon. gentleman is now convinced that my hon. friend was not quite in such error as he supposed, when he intimated that while our trade with England had increased hardly a million during the past year, our trade with the United States had increased ten millions. My hon. friend had good reason for calling the hon. gentleman's attention to the vast and enormous importance of endeavouring to develop a trade such as that with the United States, which forms very nearly the equivalent to our total trade with the whole of the rest of the world, and which is capable of being increased by a matter of ten millions in the course of one single year. Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman has alluded to one matter of very great importance to the people of this country—a matter which I propose to discuss at some length, because I have the misfortune of differing from him very widely indeed as to the position in which, under his guidance or under the guidance of his ministry, the people of Canada have been placed with respect to this same Behring Sea award. On one point I can and do congratulate the hon. gentleman, and that is that he has most wisely abstained from any glorification as to the position in which we find ourselves placed by the decision that was come to by the arbitrators who sat at Paris. Now, Sir, I have read that award from end to end many times. I have done more: I have read, I will not say all the speeches, but I have read a very considerable number of the speeches that were delivered by the eminent counsel to whom he alluded on that occasion, and, although I speak of course as a layman, and

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without regard to the particular legal points involved, I do pretend to understand as well as the hon. gentleman does where that award has left Canada, and what that award has done for our trade and commerce. Sir, I am bound to say that the effect produced on my mind by the perusal of that award—and that effect has been increased and deepened every time I have read it over—has been a feeling of the most profound dissatisfaction. I, for my part, Sir, take upon myself the responsibility of saying that not one of the three principal parties to that award have come out of the business with credit or with honour. In the first place, I say that every line of the award shows clearly, distinctly and conclusively, that the conduct of the United States Government in seizing our ships and imprisoning our sailors when found on the high seas at distances of sixty, seventy or a hundred miles from the nearest point of land, was to the last degree arbitrary and high-handed, was utterly unwarranted by any principle of international or maritime law, was without one shadow of justification, and was utterly and entirely at variance with all the pretensions previously advanced by the United States, whether as regards Behring Sea itself or whether as regards their claims on our fisheries on the Atlantic. But, Mr. Speaker, while I, for my part, will uphold the contention of my hon. friend, partially enforced by the hon. Minister of Justice, as to the conduct of the United States on that matter, I deeply regret to say, speaking here as a British subject, that I feel that the conduct of the British Government in the matter is open to almost equal censure. Mr. Speaker, what were the circumstances of the case? I am willing to admit that in the first instance, in the year 1886, there was a considerable excuse or reason—on grounds to which I shall more fully allude later on—for the apathy and indifference manifested by the British Government. The place was distant; the facts required to be verified; moreover, Sir, it is well known—and this has to be carefully considered and borne in mind by the House in studying this whole question—at that particular time the foolish conduct of the Canadian Government in the Atlantic seas had placed the British Government in a position of extreme difficulty, and Canada at large in a position of extreme danger in its relations with the United States. But, Sir, while I admit that for the first year, and perhaps for the second year even, there were excuses to be made for the conduct of the British Government, I am not disposed to admit, looking the whole matter through, that the British Government did their duty to their Canadian subjects in this matter of the Behring Sea difficulties. Sir, this is the year of grace 1894. Eight mortal years have elapsed since British ships—or Canadian ships sailing under the British flag, for there is a material difference—and Canadian subjects sailing under the British flag