

have to support at a heavy loss during the whole period of the *modus vivendi*. This loss would ultimately fall on the United States' Government, and he had, therefore, suggested whether it might not be stipulated that a moderate number of seals might be killed on the islands, sufficient to cover the loss in question. I replied that I did not think such a suggestion would commend itself to your Lordship. The proposal that sealing should be stopped, both at sea and on land, was based on the recommendation of the United States' Government Agents, whose Reports had been laid before Congress, and copies of which I transmitted to your Lordship in my despatch No. 41 of the 20th February last.

In acceding to the proposal, Her Majesty's Government would give a striking proof of their solicitude for the preservation of the seal species, and of the spirit of conciliation with which they were animated. There was to be an equal sacrifice on both sides, and it would be unreasonable that the proposed *modus vivendi* should be saddled with any special reservation for the benefit of either party.

I further observed that, in view of the fact that the opening of the fishery season is already at hand, no time should be lost in putting it into force, if it is to be of any value this season.

I suggested that it might be agreed to put it in force for this season, irrespectively of the arbitration, and that in such case it would be a convenient time to send a Joint Commission of Experts to the islands to collect evidence for the purposes of arbitration. I failed to perceive how any Arbitrators would undertake to pronounce an award on the question of a close time without proper materials on which to found their judgment, and these materials could alone be supplied by a Joint Commission. I added that I had no authority from your Lordship to make such a suggestion, but that I ventured to throw it out for consideration. Mr. Blaine replied that, as regards the reservation of the right to kill a limited number of seals on the islands to cover the loss which would result to the Company for the support of the Aleuts in their employ, that was a condition which might perhaps not be insisted on; but he was absolutely opposed to the suggestion of sending a Joint Commission of Experts to Behring's Sea, or to putting in force the *modus vivendi* until the terms of the arbitration had been definitely agreed to.

I pointed out that if this were to be a condition of the arrangement, it would probably be too late to put it in force this season, in view of the time which might elapse before the preliminaries of the arbitration had been settled, and I reminded him that his proposal was simply that it should take effect "pending the result of the arbitration."

He replied that his proposal, as understood by the President as well as himself, was subject to that condition, and he seemed to attach importance to it as being calculated to accelerate your Lordship's acceptance of the terms of arbitration proposed by his Government. I therefore explained to him that all your Lordship knew at present respecting the proposal was that it had been made by the United States' Government, obviously in their own interest, and that Her Majesty's Government had certainly nothing to gain by acceding to it. I begged him to disabuse the mind of the President of the idea that your Lordship, in giving the proposal a favourable consideration, had been actuated by any other sentiment than that of friendliness to the United States' Government.

I added that if owing to delay in the settlement of the terms of arbitration, the proposed *modus vivendi* should not be put in force this season, and the predictions of the United States' Government Agents as to the consequences which must ensue from the non-cessation of sealing should be verified, the blame would certainly not attach to Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.

Inclosure in No. 6.

Sir J. Pouncefote to Mr. Blaine.

Dear Mr. Blaine,

Washington, April 20, 1891.

I INFORMED Lord Salisbury in a private letter of your alternative suggestion for a *modus vivendi*, pending the result of the Behring's Sea arbitration, namely, to stop all sealing both at sea and on land.

Lord Salisbury seems to approve of that alternative, and he asks whether, in case