

son for this latter consequence being, however, an intention to protect seal life, we can console ourselves in the matter with the reflection that the Canadian case lost nothing from any want of able argument, as also with the feeling that, if the arbitrators' view is correct in fact, the restrictions, somewhat arduous though certain of them seem, tend to prevent a still greater evil, namely, the extinction of a valuable fishery by utter depletion. We feel, moreover, considerable confidence that the skill and energy of those engaged in our sealing industry will, despite the restrictions in question, render good and profitable account of themselves year by year.

I will only trouble the House with a couple of short extracts more. What I read was in the *Colonist* of the 18th August; on the 3rd September, the same paper makes the following comment:—

“A HUMANE PURPOSE.”

The New York *Herald*, in its congratulations as to the outcome of the Behring Sea arbitration, is inclined to be humorous. Indeed, the attitude of the United States in this matter has had about it a very great deal of the ludicrous; but, for all that, there was the constant presence of the eye to business. In its editorial on the decision of the arbitrators it says: “The position taken by the United States in the Behring Sea affair was the outcome of a humane purpose.” Where has been manifested the humanitarian aspect of the case? Was it upon the Pribylov Islands, where the hunters have, under Government protection, perpetrated the most atrocious cruelties upon the unfortunate seals, and is it to be demonstrated in the future in the unsparing use of the spears and clubs which are certain to be so effectively used on the island and other rookeries? How the well-known fur dealer, Mr. Liebes, appreciates the humanitarian aspect of the case he describes when he says: “In that decision we got just what belonged to us, nothing more and nothing less. Our rights have been preserved, and those of England have not been infringed upon. We have the seals and England dyes the skins.” Blood and fur is what the Alaska Company will have secured if the regulations go into force.

Dr. Dawson placed his hand on the weak part of the award when he directed attention to the fact that the arbitrators were precluded from making any arrangements for the preservation of seal life on land. It does look almost absurd to see the arbitrators making elaborate and stringent regulations for the preservation of seal life on the sea, where the creatures have many chances of escape, while they could not interfere with the massacre of the seals on land, where they are completely at the mercy of the pursuers. Dr. Dawson said recently:

Our investigations show conclusively that heretofore the greatest injury to the seal fishery has resulted from excessive killing and careless methods upon the Pribylov Islands, where the seals land to breed each year. Being within the territorial limits of the United States the regulation of sealing upon those islands was not submitted to the decision of the arbitrators, but, as the United States may now rely upon more than adequate external protection,

it remains for the Government of that country to carry out its professions with regard to killing there. The responsibility with regard to the future prosperity of seal life now rests mainly with the United States, and if the seals do not increase and multiply it will be because of their acts upon the islands.

But the preservers of seal life, who sat five months in Paris to consider how best they could accomplish the end they had in view, have not been able to do anything whatever towards lessening this “excessive killing” or towards improving or suppressing the “careless methods upon the Pribylov Islands.” It is on those islands common sense points out that protection ought to be given. It is there that it is most required, and there only can it be made effective. It is said that there is a limit to the seals which the Commercial Company may kill. Granting this for the sake of argument, and for that only, there is no limit to the number which the company may mutilate and torture in their efforts to get the seals which it pays best to kill.

When the American claim to property in the seals was disposed of, all that remained for the arbitrators to do was to make such provision as could most effectively extend to the seals which it was said the preservation of the species imperatively required. But they must have felt that any regulations they might make, as long as they could not touch the principal cause of the diminution of the seals, must be ridiculously inadequate. As long as the Commercial Company can do as they please with the seals on land, the restrictions on pelagic sealing will do very little towards the preservation of seal life. The sum and substance of the whole matter seems to be just now that it is the Commercial Company alone which will receive any immediate benefit from the award of the Behring Sea Arbitration. Dr. Dawson says that the United States Government may carry out its professions with regard to killing seals on the Pribylov Islands. That Government has hitherto been most lax in its oversight of the company's operations and practices, and there is no reason for concluding that it will not be equally lax in the future.

The editor goes on for half a column more commenting in a more severe manner than he did in the first editorial which I read. I have another one of a somewhat later date, which contains an expression which I do not approve of. Yet, as it expresses the views of the sealers, I feel it to be my duty to read it to the House.

Hon. Mr. BOULTON—Could not the hon. gentleman hand it in?

Hon. Mr. McINNES (B.C.)—No, I do not propose to hand it in. Probably the hon. gentleman himself would not be anxious to hand in anything bearing on free trade.

Hon. Mr. BOULTON—Free trade is a much more important question than one of this kind.