

Canadian proposal was to enter at once upon an agreement to review the whole seal question without waiting for the period fixed by the Paris Tribunal. The granting of this concession to the States is, however, made contingent by Canada upon the settlement by treaty of question in regard to which at present the relations between the two countries are not as satisfactory as they ought to be, viz.: the protection of the fish in the waters of rivers and lakes contiguous to the United States and Canada, the subject of reciprocal immigration, commercial reciprocity or any other unsettled question between the United States and Canada which either Government may see proper to bring forward. On the other hand, the consideration of these international questions is made by the United States contingent upon and subject to the conditions contained in the proposal: "That the Governments of Great Britain and the United States agree at once to a *modus vivendi* providing for a complete suspension of the killing of seals in all the waters of the Pacific Ocean and Behring Sea for one year from December, 1897, and for a suspension of all killing of seals on the Pribyloff Island for the same period." Canada, in a word, was asked to completely suspend her seal industry for one year from this present month, as a concession to be granted right away, while all she would get for it would be a promise from the States to consider fishery protection, reciprocity and other questions in dispute between the two countries at some indefinite future time. Had Canada consented to this she would have destroyed her sealing industry in order to secure a vague, non-committal promise from the States, to consider, some day, what proposals Canada had to make. Sir Wilfred declined to pay, as it were, "cash down" in return for nothing tangible. The trap was too exposed to work successfully in catching our Premier. He declared in his letter to Mr. Foster that: "The prohibition of pelagic sealing for a year would practically destroy the business for several years, because the masters, the mates and the crews, for the larger part belonging to other parts of Canada, would leave British Columbia. The sum which would likely be demanded as compensation is far beyond what it would be possible for us to induce Parliament to vote, even if we could recommend it." Moreover, the stoppage of pelagic sealing asked for by the States could not be effected without Imperial Legislation, which it would be impossible to procure for a length of time— if at all. The Premier inclines to the view, however, that such legislation might be procured late in February if a Treaty on the lines he suggests, dealing with the fisheries and reciprocity, were likely to be ratified by Congress in time for the submission to Parliament of a proposal to stop pelagic sealing. There are too many "ifs" in this proposed arrangement to render it practicable. The Imperial Parliament would not stop a business, which the Paris tribunal declared to be legitimate on the

part of Canadian sealers, merely on the chance of Congress ratifying a fishery and reciprocity Treaty. On the other hand, Congress would not ratify such a Treaty on the chance of its being followed by Imperial legislation to stop our sealing operations. Mr. Foster seems to have seen the force of the point made by Sir Wilfred, for he, in reply, suggested that a *modus vivendi* be signed at once under which our sealing would be stopped until some international agreement could be arrived at relating to it and to other matters in dispute, or suggested for mutual action. This *modus vivendi* proposal fails to meet Sir Wilfred's objection, which is that Canada is asked to give something very definite, very valuable, to be given at once, in return for an indefinite something which could not be granted for a length of time, and which might never be granted. Mr. Foster frankly acknowledges that a long delay must occur before legislation by the United States could be secured in return for Canada's having destroyed her sealing industry, and compromised her rights as guaranteed by the Paris tribunal. He says in his letter of 2nd inst. addressed to Sir Wilfred: "The variety of questions to be considered and the interests to be consulted would compel deliberation in the negotiations and might create discussion before legislation could be secured." Precisely the same conditions exists on our side, and it is just as desirable for Canadian and Imperial interests to be consulted, and deliberations affecting them be fully discussed, as it is for the same action to be taken in regard to the affairs of the United States. This is not the first time the well-known couplet of Canning proves equally applicable to the States:

"In matter of trade, the fault of the Dutch

"Is giving too little, and asking too much."

The correspondence is wound up by the American Minister saying to Sir Wilfrid:

"I am extremely sorry and greatly disappointed that your visit to Washington gives so little promise of satisfactory results, but I entertain the hope that it may yet bear good fruits."

The reciprocity arrangement referred to by the Premier and Mr. Foster, in the above correspondence, involved the granting by the States of free admission of Canadian lumber, coal, fish, barley, eggs, potatoes, and other farm products. In 1880, General Grant declared the policy of the United States to be practically one of excluding Canadian products from the United States, or of allowing Canada any bonding privileges. We fear this exclusive, un-neighbourly spirit still has influence at Washington. Our wiser policy is to cultivate closer trade relations with the mother country and other parts of the Empire, leaving the people of the States to find out, as they will in time, that international trade between two countries is carried on to their mutual advantage.