

corners and not by any extrinsic document. It is an Act defining a criminal offence, and an Act which abridges the privileges and immunities of citizens must be most strictly construed; and nothing but the clearest expression can or ought to be construed against the interest of the public in applying this principle to the present case. The terms used in the Act itself are "the waters adjacent to the Islands of St. George and St. Paul." "Adjacent," in Wharton, page 846, is held to be adjacent to the coast and within the territorial jurisdiction of the country. This language then does not apply to these defendants who are fifty miles from the nearest coast. In section 1,956 the language is "the waters of Alaska." This must also be construed by the universal law as applying to the territorial limit only. And in a letter from Mr. Everts to Mr. Foster in April, 1879, referring to a case in which certain American merchant vessels were seized by the Mexican authorities for an alleged breach of the revenue laws, although distant more than three miles from shore it was held to be an international offence and was not cured by a decree in favor of the assailants by a Mexican court. So here it is submitted that a decree of your Honor's court will not give any validity to the seizures here made, and the defendants in filing their demurrer and submitting this argument do not thereby waive their rights or submit to the jurisdiction of the court.

No. 409.

Lord Lansdowne to Sir H. Holland.

OTTAWA, 20th October, 1887.

SIR,—I have the honor to transmit to you a copy of an approved report of a Committee of the Privy Council, to which is appended a copy of a despatch from His Honor the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, covering a Minute of his Executive Council, dated 15th instant, setting forth the value to British Columbia of the present sealing industry in Behring Sea.

You will observe that the Executive Council of British Columbia consider that the rights of British subjects, as regards the Behring Sea, should be included in the scope of the duties of the International Fisheries Commission.

I have, &c.,

LANSDOWNE.

The Right Hon. Sir H. HOLLAND, Bart, &c., &c.

[Enclosure No. 1.]

CERTIFIED Copy of a Report of a Committee of the Honorable the Privy Council, approved by His Excellency the Governor General in Council on the 15th October, 1887.

The Committee of the Privy Council have had under consideration a despatch, dated 15th September, 1887, from the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, enclosing copy of a Minute of his Executive Council on the subject of the seizure of British sealing vessels in Behring Sea, and pointing out the threatened destruction of an important and growing industry in British Columbia, by a repetition of outrages on the part of United States cruisers.

The Minister of Marine and Fisheries, to whom the despatch and enclosures were referred, recommends that the Government of British Columbia be informed that no opportunity has been neglected on the part of the Dominion Government of bringing to the attention of the Government of Her Majesty the unlawful seizure of Canadian vessels in Behring Sea, and requesting that a speedy and satisfactory settlement of the losses sustained be urged upon the United States Government, and that the representations made by the Government of British Columbia have been forwarded to Her Majesty's Government.