

were it not for the extraordinary pretensions urged by the United States Government—pretensions which they would have been the first to disavow, indeed were the first to repudiate in the past, and which no nation could under any circumstances maintain for a moment in the face of the world—no difficulty whatever could have occurred in a matter which should have been long ere this settled at once by common agreement.

The Canadian Government, with the approval of the Imperial authorities, has given additional evidence of its desire to settle this vexed question with as little delay as possible by taking the necessary steps for bringing the whole subject of the legality of the seizures of Canadian vessels on the high sea before the Supreme Court, the highest tribunal in the United States. That Court has already consented to consider a petition for a writ of prohibition to prevent the District Court of Alaska from proceeding to carry out its decree of forfeiture in the case of the schooner 'Sayward,' libelled for unlawfully taking seals in the Behring Sea. The case comes up in April, and it is hoped that the great tribunal, to which the Canadians so confidently appeal, will be able to go into the whole question at issue. If so, it will be a triumph of law over uncertain and crooked diplomacy.

The part that Canada has taken in this matter is in itself an illustration of her importance in Imperial councils and of the vastness of her territorial domain, which now stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific. One hundred and thirty years ago the term 'Canada' represented an ill-defined region of country watered by the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes, inhabited by a few thousand Frenchmen living chiefly on the banks of the St. Lawrence and its tributaries. English-speaking people then came into the country and settled in the maritime provinces, on the St. Lawrence, and on the Lakes; representative institutions were established, commerce was developed, and, by 1792, five provinces, governed in the English way, were established from Cape Breton to the western limits of Ontario. For many years the indifference of English statesmen, and the ignorance which until relatively recent times prevailed with respect to the value of Canada as a home for industrious people, retarded her material and political development. Isolated provinces, without common aspirations or national aims, had no influence over Imperial councils in matters which were arranged by English diplomatists solely; whilst the Federal Republic, a union of free self-governing states, had always in view the promotion of their national strength and territorial aggrandizement. England, Spain, France, Mexico, and Russia, in turn, contributed their share