

cising their legal privileges, or that our flag should be subject to insult and humiliation, as has been the case in the past. I am not aware of the precise legal mode in which these regulations should be given effect to. That, no doubt, has been considered by the Minister of Justice and his colleagues. But, I think it would be a very great misfortune if a fresh crop of demands should spring up in consequence of such action as the American press intimates is intended to be taken by their cruisers. And I am sure the American Government would object to making compensation whether these regulations had legal effect or not, and, on the other hand, it would be very discreditable and humiliating for Canada or Great Britain to compensate their people under the circumstances. While I am on the subject, I may say that, if it be correct, as stated publicly by the United States press, that from this time out the United States are going to shepherd the annual migration of these seals along our coast and to take upon themselves the enforcement of these regulations, it appears to me, Sir, that there should be an intimation given to the British Government, which maintains a squadron on the Pacific, that the Yankee cruisers may be accompanied by a British force to see fair play. Also, I will take the opportunity to inquire whether any arrangement has been made, formally or informally, with the American Government whereby disputes arising through these regulations may be submitted to a joint court, which I think it would be an expedient thing to do. I think some of our friends from British Columbia might be able to tell us what the position of matters is there, or whether there is any considerable risk of British Columbia sealers being caught on the present occasion. We would like to hear from them; we have not heard anything of their views on this subject. At any rate, I would like to know from the Government what the precise position of the case is, whether these regulations have been enforced, or what steps require to be taken to enforce them, and whether it is their intention, or so far as they know, the intention of the British Government, to take action.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. In reply to the hon. gentleman's question I have to say that the regulations have no force or validity against British subjects until a statute has been passed by the Imperial Parliament. No doubt the obligation of Great Britain under the last treaty on the subject, pledges her to adopt the legislation which will be necessary to give the regulations force and effect; but the view is certainly held by Her Majesty's Government, and is held by this Government, undoubtedly, that a statutory provision is necessary by the Imperial Parliament to give the regulations any force or effect whatever over British subjects.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. Statutory regulations by the British Government alone, or concurrently by ours?

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. By the British Parliament alone. The contrary view was held, to some extent, on the part of the United States; how far by their Government I cannot say, but by one of the arbitrators, I see, the view has been put forward in a dissenting opinion, that the regulations have force and validity from the time of their announcement by the arbitrators. But the view is not only held by Her Majesty's Government that a statute of the Imperial Parliament would be necessary under the circumstances, but that view has been communicated to the Government at Washington; so that they are well informed that the opinion of the British Government is that the regulations are not in force and cannot be enforced without the assent of the Imperial Parliament. As regards the procedure which may be adopted, the question was discussed before the tribunal, and it was decided that that should be left to be provided by the statute which should be passed with regard to the whole subject. It would have been difficult, of course, for the international tribunal to arrive at an exact knowledge of the procedure which might be proper in order to give full effect to the regulations of the tribunal. But we have no doubt, and we have made representations to that effect, that the principles which have hitherto prevailed with regard to that subject, should prevail still.

Mr. EDGAR. The *modus vivendi*?

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. Yes, in this respect, that when the regulations are made statutory, the procedure against British subjects or vessels shall be in British courts, and the procedure against United States vessels or persons, shall be in the courts of the United States. A draft Bill has been prepared for introduction to the Parliament of Great Britain with the view of giving effect to the regulations. The Canadian Government have been consulted on the terms of that Bill, and have expressed their views with regard to it; it may be that this time it has already been introduced, because the last we heard of it was that it would be introduced very soon. I do not credit for a moment, the statement that the United States Government will attempt by a fleet of vessels or otherwise, to enforce the regulations of the Paris tribunal. I am sure that if any project is contemplated of sending out vessels, it will be for the purpose of seeing that the rights which the United States possess, irrespective of the findings of the tribunal, will be observed, and that the regulations will be enforced only when they have validity; and that if anything is contemplated on the part of the United States Government, it is the enforcement against citizens of the United States of the laws which Congress has passed or may pass, with regard to seals. We have had no intimation to that effect, but undoubtedly if,