

debate upon them or to discuss them at any great length, but to express my opinion in as few words as possible, merely to place on record the shades of difference, perhaps, rather than any great difference, which prevail between their views and mine.

With regard to the first subject, and one that has been dilated upon by several members, the question of the Behring Sea outrages, I must say (and I think what I have said before in this House on previous occasions justifies me in saying it now) that I entirely agree with every word that my hon. friends on the other side have said, with the very forcible speech of my hon. friend from Prince Edward Island, more especially as respects the conduct of the Government of the United States towards us with regard to those fisheries. There is no possibility of question that the United States laid down for themselves, in their contest or dispute with Russia, the doctrine which we now advocate and stand upon, and they did so with a force and clearness—that is to say, in the expression of opinion by their statesmen and jurists—consults, that it appears to me ought to entirely disqualify and prevent them from taking the position which is attributed to them at present of maintaining their right to control over Behring Sea. The opinion of their legal officers—the opinion of Chancellor Kent, one of their greatest writers on international law—was so clear and so strongly expressed, and met with such entire approbation in the United States from the whole of their statesmen of every party—that it is inconceivable to me that at this moment they can hold any different doctrine, and I must say that I have as yet no evidence before me that the United States do enunciate any different doctrine from that propounded by Chancellor Kent. I do not understand that the United States have taken the ground in the controversy which has been going on for some time past, that they have a right to control Behring's Sea. I do not understand that they maintain that they can legally or constitutionally prevent our fishermen from exercising their fishing rights beyond the three-mile limit in Behring's Sea. The precise nature of the discussion which has taken place it is not in my power to state to the House. It is obviously not in the public interest that while a controversy is going on between

the two Governments, the reasons and motives of either party to that discussion should be made the subject of public comment, and should be spread over the country in newspapers, and commented upon by public speakers, and feelings aroused which would be detrimental to a free and calm discussion on the subject between the two Governments; but I can state this, from personal knowledge of the subject, and on the very best and highest authority, that England has from the first taken exactly the same view of this Behring's Sea question that my hon. friends who have spoken have, that I do, and that this House does—precisely the same. There has been some delay in the conclusion of the discussion, some delay has taken place in the public declaration of the rights of Canada and the removal of the difficulties which have been suffered by our fishermen on the Pacific coast, but of course to discuss that would be to discuss the correspondence which has not yet been laid before the House, and which, I do not think, is a proper subject of discussion; but I think the Senate may rely upon this, that the correspondence will show that short of taking a position which might provoke a conflict, England has done everything in her power to bring this matter to a favorable conclusion for herself and for us. My hon. friend from Ottawa spoke of the motives which he imagines governed England in not having insisted on a settlement of this question; he attributes it to the market which England has in the United States for her produce, and I think, with a little inconsistency, my hon. friend illustrated his arguments by an instance where England did, with this very same country, whose market she so strongly desires, the very thing which he thinks she ought to do in this instance—in the Mason and Slidell case—where her jurisdiction over her own ships was invaded by the crew of a United States cruiser. In that case she took the strongest possible ground at once, and risked an immediate breach with the United States, and the loss of this market, to retain which, my hon. friend thinks, is her motive for not vindicating our rights in the same manner now. That, I think, shows pretty well that my hon. friend is mistaken as to the motive which governs England in the present instance, and that there is no foundation for the statement that she