

ment, and according to justice and equity, all such claims as shall be laid before them on the part of the Governments of Her Britannic Majesty and of the United States respectively; and such declaration shall be entered on the record of their proceedings.

XIII. The Commissioners shall then forthwith proceed to the investigation of the claims which shall be presented to them. They shall investigate and decide such claims in such order and such manner as they may think proper, but upon such evidence or information only as shall be furnished by or on behalf of their respective Governments. They shall be bound to receive and consider all written documents or statements which may be presented to them by or on behalf of their respective Governments in support of, or in answer to, any claim; and to hear, if required, one person on each side, on behalf of each Government as counsel or agent for such Government, on each and every separate claim. A majority of the Commissioners shall be sufficient for an award in each case. The award shall be given upon each claim in writing, and shall be signed by the Commissioners assenting to it. It shall be competent for each Government to name one person to attend the Commissioners as its agent to present and support claims on its behalf, and to answer claims made upon it, and to represent it generally in all matters connected with the investigation and decision thereof.

The High Contracting Parties hereby engage to consider the decision of the Commissioners as absolutely final and conclusive upon each claim decided upon by them, and to give full effect to such decisions without any objection, evasion, or delay whatsoever.

XIV. Every claim shall be presented to the Commissioners within 6 months from the day of their first meeting, unless in any case where reasons for delay shall be established to the satisfaction of the Commissioners; and then, and in any such case, the period for presenting the claim may be extended by them to any time not exceeding 3 months longer.

The Commissioners shall be bound to examine and decide upon every claim within two years from the day of their first meeting. It shall be competent for the Commissioners to decide in each case whether any claim has or has not been duly