

If the United States have any exclusive rights beyond those based on intelligible and generally admitted principles of reason and the law of nations, let them be explained and settled in a court of arbitration; and if there is any necessity for a close season let it be decided by experts in such matters. The question in itself chiefly involves the profits of a commercial monopoly, and 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.<sup>1</sup>

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

<sup>1</sup> Since this paper was presented to the American Association the English and Canadian governments have given additional evidence of their desire to settle this vexed question with as little delay as possible by taking the necessary steps through the Canadian Attorney-General for bringing the whole question of the legality of the seizures of Canadian vessels on the high sea before the Supreme Court, the highest tribunal in the United States. After argument the Supreme Court decided to grant the petition of counsel representing the British government for leave to file an application for a writ of prohibition to prevent the District Court of Alaska from carrying out its decree of forfeiture in the case of the schooner *Sayward*, labelled for unlawfully taking seals within the waters of Behring Sea. The next question that arises is, whether the court will decide that the writ of prohibition should issue; and this will be argued in October. It is to be hoped that the court will be able to decide the whole matter on its legal merits. If so, it will be a decided triumph of law over diplomacy, with all its devious ways.