

Government of Canada, any one of which might have been adopted with great profit and advantage to this people. They might, in the first instance, have used their position, which was one of indisputable and undoubted strength, so as to have conciliated the people of the United States. They might, had they understood their business, have so used their position as to have placed the Government and people of Great Britain under a very important obligation to them, or they might, in the third place have contrived to obtain substantial compensation. Any one of these three things could have been secured by hon. gentlemen, and they might, if they had been particularly dexterous, have secured them all. What have they obtained? Sir, they have failed in all. We cannot expect, after what has passed, that the United States will entertain any gratitude, or give us thanks for concessions which we have not made, but which have been wrung from us. So far as Great Britain is concerned, we know only too well what we shall be told if we presume to found a claim upon what has passed—we shall be told: You consented to become parties to this arbitration, you were allowed to name your arbitrator and to appoint your own counsel, and, if things did not go to suit you, you have only yourselves to blame. As for substantial compensation, it is only too clear that substantial compensation for the nation at large is entirely beyond our reach. It may be, as hon. gentlemen have told us, that at some distant day—I suppose eight years from this date or about sixteen years from the commission of these outrages—at some very remote date—a few individual Canadians may possibly obtain some compensation from the United States. But, so far as the nation at large goes, we have given away our birthright and we have got absolutely nothing in return. Sir, the case is clear. The United States wished to appropriate a large slice of Behring Sea, they wished to obtain various other easements. Good. Let them give a fair equivalent, let the Government secure a fair equivalent either on the Atlantic or on the Pacific, I do not care which, and I, for one, would be far indeed from holding them to too severe account. But, otherwise, the bargain ought to be void for want of consideration. Now, Sir, the truth of the matter is this—our rights in Behring Sea have been, to all intents and purposes given away by reason of the mismanagement and folly which was displayed by hon. gentlemen opposite in their dealings, on the other side of the continent, with the people of the United States. Now Sir, I do not make that assertion, which is a grave one, without warrant. When did these difficulties commence, Sir? For years and years our sealers had prosecuted that industry without disturbance. Not until August, in the year 1886, had the United States attempted to interfere with the just rights of our sealers. It is within the recollection of this House that in August, 1886,

these gentlemen opposite, in opposition to our warnings, were carrying on a vexatious kind of persecution against the fishermen of the United States, and that they had brought things to such a pass with the United States that, early in the year 1887, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain was commissioned to come to this continent with full power to do as he pleased in the matter, to reconstruct the Canadian Cabinet, and that he used his power to bring their pretensions to a very summary close. The true history of these transactions, Sir, should read as follows:—1886—Canadian sealers are illegally seized, contrary to all precedent, by the United States cruisers. British Government decline to interfere by reason of the persecutions and vexations by which the Canadian Government were at the self-same time subjecting the American fishermen on the Atlantic coast and by reason of the extreme irritation which their proceedings had produced in the minds of the people of the United States. 1887 witnessed the same state of things with this material difference, that Mr. Joseph Chamberlain had come over to tell the people of the United States that the interests of Great Britain and the United States were far too closely intertwined, and far too important to be imperilled for a few codfish. In 1888 there was a Presidential election, and, I suppose, international courtesy required that the British Government should not recklessly interfere with the time-honoured national pastime of twisting the British Lion's tail at such periods. In 1889 there was a new Government, as you will remember, installed in the United States, and it was necessary for them, before considering the question, to acquaint themselves with the details of these outrages in Behring Sea. But in 1890—and now I come to a time which the hon. gentleman and the Minister of Finance and the former Minister of Customs could tell something about—in 1890, although the outrages continued, it was not very convenient for the Canadian Government to press the matter home, because at that particular moment they were telling the electors of Canada that they were on the most friendly possible terms with the United States, and on the very verge of negotiating a most advantageous reciprocity treaty with them. I need not remark that 1891 was chiefly taken up on the part of the Canadian Government in apologizing for the fibs which political exigency had compelled them to tell upon that occasion. But in 1892, apparently, the high contracting parties had put their heads together and made preparations for practically selling these troublesome Canadians. In 1893 the bargain and sale was completed, Canada was sold but not paid for. Now, Sir, the hon. gentleman, as well as my hon. friend beside me, had something to say as to the extreme importance of allowing these matters to be referred to arbitration. I am with both of them there, that it was a great gain to humanity that disputes between two such nations as England and the