

is that the large spotted seal on the coast of Greenland often acquires a weight of nearly a thousand pounds. Now, so far as the size is concerned, I do not think it at all affects the question.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. I referred to the size in connection with the capacity of the seals for consuming fish.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). I fancy that the ordinary hair seal is quite as destructive as the other seals.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. The hon. gentleman is certainly misinformed.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). I do not find any different opinion expressed in that respect. The seal, when it catches a fish, I believe, only devours a very small portion of it, and passes on to others. The fur seal, whether large or small, is equally destructive of the fish upon which it subsists. I do not suppose that if you were to introduce the fur seal on the Atlantic coast, there would be any appreciable diminution of the quantity of fish caught in the Atlantic. Then, with regard to the fur seal of the Pacific coast, the Pribyloff and the Commander Islands are not the only places in which this animal is found; fur seals are also found about the Falkland Islands. I have not suggested that those on the Pacific coast should be introduced, because that is a matter for consideration. It seems to me that the seals from the very high latitudes in the south might be better adapted to our Atlantic waters than the seals taken from the Pacific coast.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. The hon. gentleman was referring to the temperature of the Hudson's Bay and the Pribyloff Islands being the same, and for that reason, I supposed he addressed himself to the northern seals.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). Not exclusively. Then, with regard to the area of water over which these seals wander. Now, the statement with regard to the seals of the Falkland Islands is that they go but a very short distance from the shore, and it is supposed that the explanation for doing so is that the fish upon which they subsist do not migrate very far from the coast of the Falkland Islands. Then, again, with regard to the seals further south, of South Georgia, and in the neighbourhood of the Antarctic Continent, I believe that those seals breed upon the ice just as they do off the coast of Greenland, and off the coast of Labrador; so that the fur seal—and when I say fur seal I mean the whole family—do not, in this particular, differ from the hair seal of Baffin's Bay and of the Labrador coast. They seem to prefer high latitudes, a very cold climate, and will live upon the ice as a place of resort quite as well as upon land. Now, I do not think the experiment would at all be as costly as the hon. Minister of

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell).

Marine and Fisheries suggests. I have, however, done what I think was my duty in bringing the subject under the attention of the House, and I think that the experiment might be made without any very serious cost to the public treasury. The hon. Minister thinks these animals, upon being brought from the south Atlantic coast, might not return to the land from the place where they were first deposited. I do not know about that matter. I think that the reasoning in reference to the habits of these animals would lead to a different conclusion from that which the Minister suggests; but, of course, nothing can be known definitely, until the experiment is actually made. Whether they would return to precisely the same place or to the neighbourhood of that place, would largely depend, I think, upon the habits of the fish upon which they subsist. These fur-bearing seals in the northern Pacific, I believe, largely subsist upon salmon; the hair-bearing seals of the Atlantic subsist upon the cod. Their habits are such that they occasionally cause great inconvenience to fishermen, and sometimes rob their nets of the fish that are caught in them. I am speaking now of the hair seals, and the fur seals could not be a greater enemy than the one that already exists, and unless they were to appreciably diminish the catch, there would be an advantage in their introduction. I do not think the hon. gentleman would suggest that their destructive powers are likely to be so great that they would seriously interfere with the protection of our fisheries. If that were so, if that was the conclusion at which the hon. gentleman arrived from his reading and investigation of the subject, when it was practically before him, then it seems to me that he ought to have taken a different position from the one he did take in discussing this question with our neighbours, because that would be a reason for the extermination of the fur-bearing seals altogether, instead of undertaking to extend special protection for their preservation. Now, the arbitration, which we must assume acted fairly upon the evidence which was before them, did not come to that conclusion; they did not come to the conclusion that the fur-bearing seals in the northern Pacific waters were a nuisance that ought to be abated.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. The hon. gentleman will allow me to correct him, because he is falling into an error in his argument now. The arbitrators had no jurisdiction to do anything else than to consider how best to preserve the hair seals. The treaty provided in express terms that that was the point upon which they were to base their regulations; therefore, it was entirely out of order for them to propose that they should be exterminated.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). The hon. gentleman will see that he has only moved his difficulty one stage further back.