

Marine and Fisheries—Fisheries Branch.

RUSSIAN AWARD—SEIZURE OF “WILLIE M’GOWAN” AND “ARIEL.”

In the report for 1897, page 365, it is explained that the Russian Government had made an offer of \$40,078.75 as compensation for the seizure, in 1892, of the two above-mentioned sealing schooners in the North Pacific Ocean.

This offer was accepted by both Her Majesty’s Government and that of Canada, and the money was paid over for distribution.

On examination of the details of the Russian offer, it was found that the amount was divided between the two vessels as follows :—

“Willie McGowan”	\$20,642 16
“Ariel”	19,436 59
Total	<hr/> \$40,078 75

After proper precautions had been taken to establish the persons to whom this money was payable, cheques were issued to the owners of the respective vessels for the amounts due them, thus affording a satisfactory conclusion to this claim against the Russian Government.

ARBITRATION OF SEIZURES BY RUSSIA IN 1892.

The seizure of Canadian sealing schooners by the Russian Government in 1892 is fully explained in the departmental report for that year, and the question is continued at considerable length in that for the following year (1893).

From the above, it will be observed that on the protest of Great Britain, the Russian Government submitted the question of the seizures to a special commission of its own appointment. The decision of this commission found that, with the exception of the “Willie McGowan” and the “Ariel,” for which vessels compensation has been paid, as explained above, the seizures were regular and could be maintained.

Owing to conflicting statements, more especially with regard to the position of the vessels when seized, considerable diplomatic correspondence ensued, which resulted in the Russian Government finally agreeing to submit the cases of the remaining vessels to arbitration. These vessels are : “Rosie Olsen,” “Carmolite,” “Maria,” “Vancouver Belle,” “Walter P. Hall,” “C. H. Tupper,” boat of the “E. B. Marvin,” boats of the “W. P. Sayward.”

All possible information has been collected, and every means has been taken to properly and formally present these claims for arbitration.

The arbitrator chosen by the three Governments concerned was Monsieur Alphonse Rivier, President of the Institute of International Law, and Consul-General for Switzerland at Brussels, and everything was in readiness to proceed, but in September, 1898, the death of Monsieur Rivier was announced, and a resort to diplomatic correspondence became again necessary, for the choice of a successor, who has been agreed upon by the Canadian Government and that of Her Majesty, in the person of Mr. Henning Matzen, Professor of Law at the University of Copenhagen.

No doubt as little delay as possible will occur in the arbitration of these claims.

Respectfully submitted.

R. N. VENNING.

Ottawa,