

declared that the seals are abundant, and that there is no necessity that a fair number should not be taken, both from the islands and from the ocean. The arbitration of this year will enable the governments concerned to make regulations for future years, which shall put each neighbor on the Pacific in a position to use wisely and with a view to future profit the annual migration of the seal herds.

It is well to remember that the only debatable point which delayed the ratification of the Arbitration Treaty by the Senate is a very small one, and refers only to the single season's hunting by no great number of vessels. While men of indubitable probity declare that this cannot injure a property, the value of which consists chiefly in a right, which cannot be assailed, to catch the seals on shore, it seems unnecessary to have any further delay in concluding the reference to arbitration. This arbitration will decide the more important matter of the right of a maritime power to close any portion of the ocean to the citizens of other nations. Some complaints of delay have arisen on both sides, but it is certain that the British have expedited the correspondence as far as practicable, and it is, indeed, only natural that both sides should desire the settlement of a question which cannot be said to involve the permanent national interests of either party. The United States believes that it purchased certain rights from the Russians. These are only in part questioned by those who fully admit all rights as to land ownership, but object only to be deprived of that which not only the British, but all other maritime people, claim as common property, namely, the right to hunt at will over the unenclosed length and breadth of the ocean itself.

When the arbitration has done its work the seal-fishing industry must be protected by a sensible close time, giving the subjects of the United States and Britain each the power to use and not to abuse the advantages given by the northern migration of the fur seal. It is incompatible with any international comity that one power alone can patrol the open sea. Other nations—Russia, France, Germany, or any that may be named—have a right to the navigation of these waters, and it is primarily in the interest of the powers having harbors in the more immediate neighborhood that provision should be mutually made for the preservation of the seal species, not by the dragging in of ancient