

MR. SHERMAN'S LETTER.

He Says England Is to Blame For Commercial Extirpation of the Fur Seal.

The following is the full text of the letter of John Sherman, United States Secretary of State, to Ambassador Hay, at London, and over which such a furor has been created:

His Excellency John Hay, etc., London;

The British Ambassador has handed me a copy of a despatch to him from Her Majesty's principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, which despatch constitutes the reply of the British Government to the proposal of the President, as presented in a note of your embassy, for a modus vivendi for the suspension of all killing of seals for the present season, and for a joint conference of the Powers concerned, with a view to the necessary measures being adopted for the preservation of the fur seal in the North Pacific. It will be seen that both proposals are rejected.

I need hardly say that the President is greatly disappointed at this action, especially when it is based upon such an unsubstantiated and inadequate reasons. The President's concern, in view of the depleted condition of the seal herd, was occasioned not alone from an examination of Dr. Jordan's report of 1896, and what he had reason to suppose were the conclusions of Professor Thompson, but it was based upon a series of observations and statistics covering a much longer period than that treated by these gentlemen, establishing a state of facts beyond refutation, and which is in part set forth in my note to the British Ambassadors of the same date as my cablegram to you. It is therefore, quite surprising that Her Majesty's Secretary should base his rejection of the proposals of this Government, so impressively presented, upon the report of one scientist, whose facts and conclusions are incorrectly apprehended, and the delayed report of another, which is for the first time made public concurrently with the receipt of this lordship's note.

It would have been gratifying to me and useful to my Government, in studying the important subject under consideration, if Prof. Thompson's report could have been made public with the promptness which marked the appearance of that of Dr. Jordan. In that case there would have been ample time for both Governments to have examined the reports of these two eminent scientists before the opening of another sealing season. But it seems to have better suited the purposes of Her Majesty's Government to withhold Prof. Thompson's report until an opportunity was afforded to examine that of Dr. Jordan, and thus enable the former to pass the latter in review, criticise its statements and as far as possible minimize its conclusions.

It is not pleasant to have to state that the impartial character which it has been the custom to attribute to the reports of naturalists of high standing has been greatly impaired by the apparent subjection of this report to the political exigencies of the situation. It is further to be regretted that no opportunity was afforded this Government to examine it before the definite and final rejection of the President's proposals, based mainly upon its conclusions, was communicated to me. This conduct recalls the incident which preceded the arbitration at Paris, and which came near rendering that arbitration abortive, when a similar report of a British commission was withheld until after the case of each Government was exchanged and the report of the American commission made public.

Lord Salisbury asserts that Dr. Jordan's report does not contain any facts warranting the statement that there is "a depleted condition and prospective early extinction of the herd." The note of your Embassy of the 10th ultimo does not attribute such a statement to Dr. Jordan, but its difficult to understand how any one can read his report without reaching the conclusion that such is the real condition of the herd. On page 18 he says: "From this time (1886) on the decline has been more rapid and has been continuous."

On page 21 he clearly recognizes diminution as evidenced by photographs, as also by decrease of harems. On page 66 he uses this expression: "As the herd is steadily diminishing, the spring, or northwest, catch is becoming relatively unimportant." Other citations might be made, but it would seem unnecessary in view of his declarations often repeated in his report, respecting pelagic sealing, from which I give only one extract (page 29): "Pelagic sealing, in the judgment of the members of the present commission, has been the sole cause of the continued decline of the fur seal herds. It is at present the sole obstacle to their restoration, and the sole limit to their indefinite increase. It is therefore evident that no settlement of the fur seal question, as regards either the American or Russian Islands, can be permanent unless it shall provide for the cessation of the indiscriminate killing of fur seals, both on the sealing grounds and on their migrations. There can be no 'open season' for the killing of females if the herd is to be kept intact."

Prof. Thompson's report is plainly written with a view to minimize, as far as possible the depleted condition of the herd on the Pribyloff Islands, and requires a critical examination not possible within the limits of the present instruction, but its general purpose may be briefly stated. It is to be regretted that he should have contracted his study for within the parview of his instructions. In the outset of his report he says: "The main object of my mission was the collection of information and statistics with regard to the working and effectiveness of the regulations" of the Paris Tribunal. But we look in vain in his report for any discussion of that all-important subject. He confined his enquiry and report to the subordinate subject of the number of seals resorting to the islands, and particularly to the relative

number in 1895 and 1896. The result of his observations and enquiry seemed to be that on some rookeries there was an increase and on others a decrease, but on the whole a possibly state of equilibrium for the last two years, although he concedes a diminution as compared with 1892. If all the professor's claims is admitted, it does not militate against the contention that since pelagic sealing became general the decline of the herd has been steady and rapid.

The apparent equilibrium noted in his report is well explained by Dr. Jordan, when he says (page 18): "There is evidence that the modus vivendi of 1892-93, by which the Behring Sea was closed to the sealing fleet, has produced for 1895 and 1896 a slight check of the diminution. The reason for this is that, in addition to the savings of mothers, no pups were starved to death in 1892 and 1893, and those which might have been starved have returned as breeders or as killable seals in 1895 and 1896."

Since the receipt of Lord Salisbury's despatch explicit enquiry has been made of Dr. Jordan as to the relative condition of the herd in 1895 and 1896, and in previous years, and he has furnished the chapter on the "Decline of the Herd" from the forthcoming final report of himself and associates, from which the following extract is taken: "While the amount of the decline cannot be given with mathematical exactness, it is possible from the data at hand to make an approximate estimate. From a careful study of all the conditions, in our opinion the fur seal herd of the Pribyloff Islands has decreased to about one-fifth in size in 1872-1874; to somewhat less than one-half its size in 1890, and that between the seasons of 1895 and 1896 there has been a decrease of about 10 per cent."

Although Prof. Thompson has been very careful throughout the report to say nothing likely to embarrass his government in the "conclusions," the voice of the true scientific investigator speaks in firm and certain tones. While he regards "the alarming statements" of the "herd's immense decrease" as overdrawn, he says: "There is still abundant need for care and for prudent measures of conservation in the interests of all." It is not difficult to believe that the margin of safety is a narrow one, if it be not already in some measures overstepped. We may hope for a perpetuation of the present numbers; we cannot count on an increase. And it is my earnest hope that a recognition of mutual interests and a regard for the common advantage may suggest measures of prudence which shall keep the pursuit and slaughter of the animals within due and definite bounds.

In view of such explicit language it is not easy to understand how Lord Salisbury can reconcile his refusal to entertain the proposals of the President with the interests of his own countrymen, to say nothing of the friendly relations which he desires to maintain with the United States, Russia and Japan.

The experience had with the scientific commissions of 1892, as well as the reports of 1896 just under review, shows that it is difficult through them to reach a harmony of views, but we have at hand certain statistics of undisputed authority pointing unmistakably to conclusions which should be controlling.

The operations of the pelagic fleet in Behring Sea since the Paris regulations have been in force are as follows:

1894—Thirty-seven vessels, 31,585 seals taken, or an average of 853 per vessel.

1895—Fifty-nine vessels, 44,169 seals taken, or an average of 748 per vessel.

1896—Sixty-seven vessels, 29,500 seals taken, or an average of 440 per vessel.

It thus appears that nearly double the number of vessels in 1886 were not able to take as many seals as were taken in 1894, and the catch per vessel fell off nearly one half. Lord Salisbury attributes this large falling off in Behring Sea "to the stormy weather prevailing," but does not cite his authority. I am not aware of any published report to that effect. Capt. Hooper, who commanded the American cruising fleet in Behring Sea in 1895 and 1896, reports: "The weather in Behring Sea was not materially different in the last two years. Conditions admitted of boarding operations by the fleet twenty-five days in 1894 and twenty-four days in 1895."

The examination and comparison of the logs of sailing vessels for 1895 and 1896 confirms Capt. Hooper's report. The above figures with the statistics contained in my note of the 9th ult., to the British Ambassador, make it very clear that the seal herd is becoming rapidly depleted, and that "the margin of safety," as Professor Thompson expresses it, has been "already overstepped." It is to be inferred that "the margin of safety" is intended to signify the point at which pelagic sealing ceases to be profitable. He cannot have had in mind biological extermination, for that point could not have been reached so long as a single bull and harem existed. The point when sealing ceased to be profitable seems to have been reached during last year. A table appended to his report shows that the total product of the pelagic catch of 1896 in the London market was about half the amount of that of 1895, and Lord Salisbury informs us that this result has "brought many owners of the sealing vessels on the verge of bankruptcy." It thus appears that the condition of things predicted by the government of the United States, as quoted below, has already come to pass—the commercial extermination of the seals. If pelagic sealing continues to be tolerated, a limited number of vessels will carry on the indiscriminate slaughter, in the hope, by a favorable cruise, of recouping the losses of the previous years, and the rookeries on the island will be still further depleted. But the biological existence of the fur seal may still be continued, and Her Majesty's Ambassador may repeat the declaration so often made during the last two years that there is "no reason to fear that the seal herd is threatened with early extermination."

(Here follows a long and exhaustive

review to the efforts made by Secretaries Gresham and Olney to secure a settlement of the dispute.)

The manner in which the British Government has discharged its police duties under the award is in marked contrast with its appeal for a strict observance of the five years period of the regulations. An equal obligation rests upon each government to patrol the waters embraced in the award area, in order to see that the regulations are not violated by the sealing vessels. In 1791 the Government of the United States furnished twelve vessels for the patrolling fleet at great expense, and only one vessel was furnished by the British Government. In 1895 five United States vessels patrolled the award area, and only two British vessels, one for a short time only in Behring Sea, and the other took no part whatever in the patrol, as its presence was almost constantly required in Unalaska harbor to take over the British sealing vessels seized in Behring Sea. Owing to the repeated complaints of the Government of the United States as to the inadequacy of the British patrol an additional cruiser was ordered into Behring Sea during the season of 1896, although it was stated by the British Government that "so far as they had been able to judge, the force employed up to the present time has been sufficient."

As it is shown that practically no patrol service has been rendered in Behring Sea by the British cruisers during the previous year, the inference from this language would seem to be that Her Majesty's Government understood that the American cruisers only were to perform the patrol duty, and the British cruisers to take over and act upon the validity of seizure of British vessels.

The detailed enforcement of the regulations has further developed on the part of the British Government a strange misconception of the true spirit and intent of the arbitrators. Under article VI of the regulations, the use of firearms in Behring Sea was prohibited, and to enforce that prohibition it was agreed between the two Governments for the year 1894 that sealing vessels might have their arms and ammunition placed under seal. But on May 11, 1895, although this Government had every reason to believe from the order in council that the British Government had given its concurrence to the agreement, the British ambassador gave notice that his Government would not renew the arrangement as to the sealing of arms for the coming season, and defend its action on the ground that the possession of arms, etc., by a sealing vessel was not "forbidden by the award regulations."

This tardy action of the British Government in refusing to renew the arrangement of 1894 led to much trouble and inconvenience in connection with the patrol of Behring Sea. The British Government made grievous complaint against the severe measures of search resorted to by the American cruisers, which gave rise to lengthy correspondence. On July 2, 1896, Secretary Olney submitted a proposition to put an end to the controversy by an examination of vessels entering Behring Sea, to discover whether or not firearms were used, but this proposition was not accepted. A further attempt was made by Secretary Olney to procure some agreement for the season of 1895, when it was urged that American vessels frequenting Behring Sea were required to have their arms sealed, and on returning to their home ports their skins were carefully inspected, while Her Majesty's Government refused to enforce the provision as to arms, and declines the inspection of skins, measures which this Government regards as "absolutely essential for preventing the unlawful destruction of seals." Nevertheless, another season has been entered upon with a similar settlement of this vexed question.

The obligations of an international award, which are equally imposed on both parties to its terms, cannot properly be assumed or laid aside by one of the parties only at its pleasure. Such an award which in its practical operation is binding only on one party in its obligation, and is to be employed mainly by the other party in its benefits; is an award which, in the interest of public morality and good conscience, should not be maintained. Having in view the expressed object of the arbitration at Paris, and the declared purpose of the arbitrators in prescribing the regulations when it became apparent, as it did after the first year's operation of them, and with increased emphasis each succeeding year that the regulations were inadequate for the purpose, it was the plain duty of the British Government to acquiesce in the request of that of the United States for a conference to determine what further measures were necessary to secure the end in view by the arbitration.

A course so persistently followed for the past three years has practically accomplished the commercial extermination of the fur seals, and brought to naught the patient labors and well meant conclusions of the tribunal of arbitration. Upon Great Britain must therefore rest, in the public conscience of mankind, the responsibility for the embarrassment in the relations of the two nations which must result from such conduct. One of the evil results is already indicated in the growing conviction of our people that the refusal of the British Government to carry out the recommendation of that tribunal will needlessly sacrifice an important interest of the United States. This is shown by the proposition seriously made in Congress to abandon negotiations and destroy the seals on the islands as the speedy end to a dangerous controversy, although such a measure has not been entertained by that department. We have felt assured that, as it has been demonstrated that the practice of pelagic sealing, if continued, will not only bring itself to an end, but will work the destruction of a great interest of a friendly nation, Her Majesty's Government would desist from an act so suicidal and so unneighborly, and which certainly could not command the approval of its own people.

The President, therefore, cherishes the

hope that even at this late day the British Government may yet yield to his continued desire, so often expressed, for a conference of the interested powers, and in delivering to Lord Salisbury a copy of this instruction you will state to him that the President will hail with great satisfaction any indication on the part of Her Majesty's Government of a disposition to agree upon such a conference. Respectfully yours, JOHN SHERMAN.

LOCAL AND OTHER ITEMS

THE LYCEUM tonight.

EIGHTY-FOUR in the shade this afternoon. Yesterday afternoon eighty-five was the highest recorded.

THE WEATHER.—Moderate west and south winds, fair and warm with thunderstorms at a few places.

POLICE COURT.—This forenoon Dennis Dowling was fined \$2 or 10 days for drunkenness. John McLaughlin, for larceny of crockeryware was remanded for eight days on his own recognizance.

RIFLE MEETING.—A meeting of the Queen's Co. Rifle Association will be held on Friday evening next at 8 o'clock, in Mr. Stewart's office, Morris Block. A full attendance requested.—G. L. Doherty, Major, President.

IMPORTANT.—On Wednesday evening at 7.30 o'clock, a women's prayer meeting will be held in Zion Church at which Mr. Spence will give an address to wives and mothers. An invitation is given to every woman in our city interested in a husband, son, brother or friend, to be present at this meeting. 167—2in.

A SAD OCCURRENCE.—An Ottawa despatch says: A fifteen-year-old lad, named Bonsecours, intoxicated, as the result of heavy drinking at his sister's wedding, on Sunday night, was drowned while bathing in the Rideau River here, this evening. The bride's reception was taking place to-night, when the arrival of the body put an end to the festivities.



Fifty Years Ago.

This is the way it was bound to look. When grandfather had his "pictur took." These were the shadows cast before the coming of Conjuror Daguerre. And his art; like a girl in a pinafore some day to bloom to a goddess fair. Men certainly were not as black, we know as they pictured them, 50 years ago.

Ayer's Sarsaparilla

began to make new men, just as the new pictures of men began to be made. Thousands of people fronted the camera with skins made clean from blotch and blemish, because they had purified the blood with Ayer's Sarsaparilla. It is as powerful now as then. Its record proves it. Others imitate the remedy; they can't imitate the record:

50 Years of Cures.

JUBILEE STAMPS.

As is now well known, the Postal Authorities will not sell to the public the 6c and 8c stamps of the Jubilee issue unless the full set up to \$5 is taken, and as the public naturally refuses to buy the higher values from \$1 to \$5 which are absolutely useless for postal service many people are with out the 6 or 8. Any one wanting any of these rarest of the Jubilee issue, can have them at following prices.—

1 cent Black, \$2 00
6 cent Brown, 2.00
8 cent Lilac, 1.00

or one of each of the three for \$4.50. As there are only a few, it would be well to apply early.

Address A. B. C., P. O. Box, 652, Charlottetown

P. S.—Will sell 5 of the 8c stamps for \$4.00

June 20

WANTED—UPRIGHT AND FAITHFUL gentlemen or ladies to travel for responsible established houses in P. E. Island Monthly \$5.00 and expenses. Position steady. References. Enclose self-addressed stamped envelope. The Dominion Company, Dept. H, Chicago. 168—1 mo

SAIL BOAT.—For sale cheap for cash. Sails and rigging complete. Enquire at office of Judge Fitzgerald, Canoe Cove. 165—

Meet me at The Always Busy Store.

SHIRT WAISTS

THAT FIT

That is the kind we sell. Well made, well finished and the

BEST QUALITIES

that the different prices will stand.

STANLEY BROS.,

The Always Busy Store

A By-Law Respecting Milk Vendors.

Souvenir OF P. E. Island

a copy of "Prince Edward Island," is about the best thing for the purpose of giving strangers an idea of our beautiful Province. It consists of 100 pp. printed on the best paper. The engraving are numerous and first class. The price is 25c a copy. They are for sale at all bookstores in Charlottetown, at Summerside, and Souris and on the train. They may be obtained at this office securely wrapped, ready to mail to friends abroad. Write or call.

THE EXAMINER OFFICE.

.....QUEEN STREET.....

Str Fastnet

SEASON OF 1897.

Sails from Ch'town every Friday at noon for Halifax, calling at Summerside, Port Hood, Port Hasting, Port Hawkesbury, Arichat, Canso, Isaac Harbor, Salmon River, Sheet Harbor. Returning leaves Halifax every Tuesday evening at 6 o'clock, making same calls, including Souris.

Through Freight Solicited. Rates low to Halifax. Apply to

W. W. CLARKE, Agent.

Be it enacted by the City Council of the City of Charlottetown as follows:—

- 1. Every person publicly selling Milk in this City in or from any vehicle shall obtain from the Mayor thereof a License as a Milk Vendor and the Mayor is hereby authorized to issue such license upon receiving the License fee hereinafter mentioned.
- 2. The License fee for the present year 1897 and up to the Thirtieth day of April next shall be Fifteen dollars and shall be payable on the Twentieth day of August next and thereafter the said License fee shall be fifteen dollars per annum and shall be payable on the First day of May in each year.
- 3. The City Collector for the time being shall be and is hereby appointed Inspector of all Milk offered for sale in this City.
- 4. It shall and may be lawful for the said Inspector to examine and inspect all milk so offered for sale wherever the same may be offered.
- 5. It shall by the duty of every person keeping or offering Milk for sale whether on the streets or in shops or private dwellings to furnish to and permit the said Inspector to take samples thereof for examination or analysis, and any person hindering the said Inspector in the discharge of his duty, or refusing to permit him to examine and inspect or to take samples of such Milk, shall be deemed guilty of an offence against and incur the penalties of this By-Law.
- 6. It shall be the duty of the said Inspector whenever he has reason to believe any milk to be adulterated with water or any other substance to procure a sample thereof to be analysed and to prosecute all persons who may be found selling offering or keeping for sale any adulterated Milk.
- 7. No person shall expose for sale or sell anywhere in this City milk adulterated with water or with any deleterious substance.
- 8. No person shall expose for sale or publicly sell Milk in this City in or from any vehicle without having first obtained a License therefor in manner above mentioned.
- 9. Any person or persons guilty of any infraction of any of the provisions of this By-Law shall upon conviction in the City Court of the Stipendiary Magistrate on the oath or affirmation of any credible witness forfeit and pay at the discretion of the said Magistrate a penalty not exceeding the sum of Thirty Dollars for each offence exclusive of costs and in default of payment thereof it shall and may be lawful for the said Magistrate to commit the offender or offenders to the Common Jail of the County of Queens County for any period not exceeding Thirty days unless the said penalty and costs be sooner paid, provided always that nothing in this By-Law shall be construed to require persons selling milk in stores or from their private dwellings to take out the License above mentioned.

H. M. DAVISON, W. E. DAWSON, City Clerk, Mayor. City Clerk's Office, July 13th, 897—2 k.s.