

This claim was disputed by Canada in 1886, and from that time disputes and seizures of sealing vessels were frequent. Against the latter strong protests were made by Great Britain, on behalf of Canada as part of the British Empire.

In 1891 negotiations were begun for submission of the questions involved to arbitration. The Imperial Parliament passed, in 1891, the Seal Fishery Bill, and by Order in Council authorized the enforcement of a close season for one year—anticipating that an award would, by May, 1892, be made by the selected arbitrators. The anticipation not being realized, Great Britain and the United States came to an agreement, ratified by the United States Senate, by which the killing of seals was, in effect, prohibited in the disputed area till the results of the arbitration were forthcoming.

The Treaty of Arbitration was formally ratified by the High Contracting Powers on May 7th, 1892. The Court of Arbitration was composed of Lord Hannen and Sir John Thompson, Minister of Justice, Canada, representing Great Britain; Judge Harlan and Senator John P. Morgan, representing the United States; Baron de Courcel, France; Marquis Visconti-Venosta, Italy, and G. Gram, Sweden and Norway.

Baron de Courcel was appointed President on the meeting of the Court in Paris, March 23rd, 1892. Hon. C. H. Tupper, Canadian Minister of Marine and Fisheries, acted as the British Agent, and John W. Foster, Ex-Secretary of State, acted in like capacity for the United States. The British Counsel were Ex-Attorney General Sir Richard Webster, Sir Charles Russell, Attorney General in the Gladstone Administration, and Mr. Christopher Robinson, Q.C., of the Canadian Bar. Counsel for the United States were James C. Carter, Frederick R. Coudert, Henry W. Blodgett and Edward J. Phelps.

The debates of the Court, it was decided, should be held in English, and the journal of proceedings kept in French, with an English version.

After preliminaries had been arranged, another adjournment was taken to April 4th, in order to give time for the examination of the printed arguments presented by Great Britain and the United States. Both sides filed claims for damages—the United States for losses to its revenue and on account of the Alaska Commercial Company, because of the reduced number of skins taken, owing to alleged diminution of the herd by the pelagic sealing of British vessels; and Great Britain on account of losses to the owners of vessels seized by the United States.

The arguments were begun April 12th, James C. Carter and F. R. Coudert, under arrangement, to make the opening addresses