

and the Lake of the Woods; thence along the water communication to Lake Saisaginnaga, and through that lake; thence to and through Cypress Lake, Lac du Bois Blanc, Lac la Croix, little Vermilion Lake and Lake Namecan, and through the several smaller lakes, straits or streams connecting the lakes here mentioned, to that point in Lac la Pluie, or Rainy Lake, at the Chaudiere Falls, from which the Commissioners traced the line to the most north-western point of the Lake of the Woods; thence along the said line to the said most north-western point, being in latitude $49^{\circ} 23' 55''$ north, and in longitude $95^{\circ} 14' 38''$ west from the Observatory at Greenwich; thence according to existing treaties, due south to its intersection with the 49th parallel of north latitude, and along that parallel to the Rocky Mountains. It being understood that all the water communications and all the usual portages along the line from Lake Superior to the Lake of the Woods, and also Grand Portage, from the shore of Lake Superior to the Pigeon river, as now actually used, shall be free and open to the use of the citizens and subjects of both countries.

The words "along that parallel to the Rocky Mountains" bring under notice a deviation from the terms of the original Treaty of 1783, which were, as will be seen on reference to its text, above, viz: "thence on a due west course to the River Mississippi."

It was discovered that a line drawn due west from the most north-westerly point of the Lake of the Woods passed altogether to the north of the Mississippi river. Now, if the rule which was to its fullest extent applied to the north-west angle of Nova Scotia had been ever so little applied to the due west line, it would have been changed into a line running to some point on the Mississippi, but this would not suit; the Americans proceeded on their systematic course of aggression; the words of the Treaty of 1783 were not admitted as requiring that the Mississippi should be a point in the frontier; a view which any impartial man would naturally take; and it was urged that as the line did not strike the Mississippi, it must run on, due west, at least as far as the Rocky Mountains. Great Britain, unfortunately for us, admitted this, and the settlement was made in a Convention executed in October, 1818, as follows:—

Art. IV. It is agreed that a line drawn from the most north-western point of the Lake of the Woods, along the 49th parallel of north latitude, or if the said point shall not be in the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude, then that a line drawn from the said point due north or south, as the case may be, until the said line shall intersect the said parallel of north latitude, and from the point of such intersection due west along and with the said parallel, shall be the line of demarcation between the territories of the United States and those of His Britannic Majesty, and that the said line shall form the northern boundary of the said territories of the United States and the southern boundary of the territories of His Britannic Majesty, from the Lake of the Woods to the Stony Mountains.

By this convention, a vast territory was surrendered by Great Britain. The most northerly branch of the Mississippi is a degree and a half south of the said point on the Lake of the Woods, so that if the line had been run west from the Mississippi, we should still have had a belt of land a hundred miles in width, from the Mississippi to the Rocky Mountains, more than we have now. The original boundary granted to the States, it must however be remembered, was the Mississippi; and when its extension westward was permitted, the line might well have been drawn with some regard to the natural features of the country. Then, we should have had control of the whole valley of the Red River, instead of, as now, seeing the major portion of its course belonging to Minnesota and Dacotah; the valley of the Mouse river, an important affluent of the Assineboine, would have been all ours; not to speak of the influence which an equitable settlement of this boundary would have had on that of the line on the Pacific Coast.

This naturally brings us to the question of our boundaries near to the Pacific Ocean, and the examination of this subject is much facilitated by an exhaustive summary of the facts antecedent to 1846, written in that year by Mr. E. A. Meredith, entitled "The Oregon Question." The Americans, it will be remembered, claimed all the Pacific shores as far as the parallel of $54^{\circ} 40'$ north, basing the claim (1) on their treaty with Spain in 1819, by which Spain defined the parallel of 42° as being the boundary between her possessions in Mexico and the United States, and (2) on their own discoveries there. Indeed they made, in 1822, a Treaty with Russia, in which it was agreed that neither party should make any establishments upon the coasts of the Pacific north or south of $54^{\circ} 40'$ as the case might be. Great Britain claimed under the Nootka Convention made with Spain in 1790. The constructive claims of the Americans under the Spanish treaty of 1819, Mr. Meredith's pamphlet thoroughly disposes of; their claims founded on discovery are equally absurd, for no such discovery could be commenced before they were a nation, in 1783, and in fact they were simply these, that Capt Gray, in May of 1792, sailed ten miles up the Columbia river; that thirteen years afterwards Lewis and Clarke, two American citizens, crossed the Rocky Mountains, in the southern portion of the territory, and by means of one of the southern tributaries of the Columbia reached that river, which they followed to the Pacific. The only settlement they ever had there was Astoria, which the British took possession of in 1813 as being within their lines and re-christened Fort George, and which the States claimed should be surrendered under Art. I. of the Treaty of Ghent, providing for the restitution of captured territory.* Of the British claim, Mr. Meredith writes as follows: "To do justice to the discoveries of Great Britain, I should go back to 1597, and remind you of the discoveries of the famous Drake on this coast; I should dwell 'also upon the accurate and well authenticated voyages of Cook, in 1778. I shall, however, content myself with stating that to Captain Cook belongs the discovery of Nootka Sound and of Cape Flattery, at the entrance of the Fuca Straits, and that Berkeley, a British captain, first sailed through these straits." In 1792, Vancouver, who was dispatched by the British Government in 1792 to witness the fulfilment on the part of Spain of the terms of the Nootka Convention, circumnavigated the island which now bears his name, and in October of that year, his lieutenant, Broughton, ascended the Columbia 100 miles from its mouth, and took possession of the country in the name of England. Moreover, Mr. Thompson, astronomer to the Hudsons' Bay Company, explored the Columbia and established fortified trading posts upon it in 1800, 1807, 1809, 1810, 1811.

The first treaty stipulation between England and the States, with reference to this subject, is the Art. III. of the Convention of 1818, by which it was agreed that all claims of either party should be held in obedience, without detriment to either, for ten years. The provision was renewed in 1827, indefinitely. After the fierce excitement of 1846, the matter was to some extent settled by the Treaty of Washington, 1846, which is as follows:—

Art. I. From the point on the 49th parallel of north latitude, where the boundary laid down in existing treaties and conventions between Great Britain and the United States terminates, the line of boundary between the territories of His Britannic Majesty and those of the United States shall be continued westward along the said 49th parallel of north latitude, to the middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver's Island; and thence southerly, through the middle of the said channel and of Fuca's Straits to the Pacific Ocean; provided however,

* Fort George was restored in 1808, notoriously on the understanding that the British claims to the territory should not be affected by the surrender, these claims being then under negotiation in London.