

It was observed in the instruction addressed to Lord Lyons on the 21th of last month, that, as far as there is only one channel separating the Continent from Vancouver's Island, no doubt can be entertained as to the true boundary line, which the Treaty says shall run down the middle of the channel which separates the Continent from Vancouver's Island. The commencement of that channel is undoubtedly the Gulf of Georgia, and down its centre the boundary line must run; but it may be asked, what is the continuation of the channel from the point where the Gulf of Georgia comes to an end, and where does the boundary line join the Straits of Fuca?

With regard to these points, the Treaty is not sufficiently explicit; and it is to be regretted that there was not attached to the Treaty a map or chart by which the meaning and intention of Article I could have been authoritatively ascertained; nevertheless, as has been already observed, the true interpretation of the Treaty is the only law to which either party is entitled to appeal. It is only when the interpretation of a Treaty is doubtful, or when the difficulty of carrying into effect the precise words of a Treaty is proved to be insuperable, that one is entitled to have recourse to arguments derived from other sources.

But is it quite impossible to interpret the Treaty correctly, and is the difficulty as to carrying out Article I insuperable?

Let us analyse these questions, and in so doing we will proceed to consider the wording of the Article under three heads.

1. What is its natural and obvious meaning?
2. What other possible meaning could it have had? And
3. What is the meaning which the words cannot fairly and honestly be said to bear?

And first, as to its natural and obvious meaning.

It is well known that even so late as the year 1846 our information with regard to that distant region was very imperfect. The only chart at hand in this country was that drawn by Vancouver, on which is shown the track taken by him in his voyage through the Straits of Fuca and up the channel into the Georgian Gulf, then called King George's Sound. Now, the passage navigated by