

"the Emperor Paul had granted exclusive privileges to the Russian-American Company; that is to say, latitude 55°." In his despatch to Mr. Rush, of the same date (July 22, 1823), Mr. Adams said:

"The right of carrying on trade with the natives throughout the northwest coast they (the United States) cannot renounce. With the Russian settlements at Kodiak, or at New Archangel, they may fairly claim the advantage of a free trade, having so long enjoyed it unmolested, and because it has been, and would continue to be, as advantageous at least to those settlements as to them. But they will not contest the right of Russia to prohibit the traffic, as strictly confined to the Russian settlement itself, and not extending to the original natives of the coast."

This, then, was the attitude of the United States prior to the treaty of 1824, and these were the questions to be adjusted by the proposed treaty.

It will be remembered that no protest or objection had been made to the claim of exclusive jurisdiction by Russia to the 55th parallel of north latitude; and, as we have just seen, the United States admitted the territorial claim to that extent, and the principal object of the negotiation was to fix by treaty a definite boundary line and settle the controversy in reference to trading with the natives inhabiting the coast of the Pacific ocean.

Now, it will be observed, that this contention related exclusively to the coast of the North Pacific ocean proper, for there is no reference to any other region of country, or coast, or sea. The debatable ground was the coast between 55° and 51° north latitude, where, in the language of Mr. Adams, "the sea is four thousand miles from shore to shore." Kodiak and New Archangel are mentioned as points at which the United States "might fairly claim the advantage of a free trade;" and while the Ukase embraced the Aleutian and Kurile islands there is no reference to them in the protest, nor in the correspondence or negotiation, nor in the treaty.