

“ces of claims of property and possession made by those professing
 “to be the true proprietors under their charter of incorporation.
 “These acts of ownership have been done, exercised, and made
 “known, before the Treaty between the United States and Great
 “Britain for adjusting the boundary between them, west of the
 “Rocky Mountains, concluded and signed at Washington, on the
 “15th day of June, 1846.”

These observations and extracts will suffice to shew in general terms the nature of the position occupied by the Company, as well on the west as on the east side of the Rocky Mountains; the kind of authority and influence it exercised over that whole wide territory; and the light in which such occupation and authority, and the relations of the Company to itself, were regarded by the Government of Great Britain.

The enjoyment of these great powers and advantages was not, however, destined to be held free from challenge and disturbance, for in 1783, long before the Hudson's Bay Company had extended its possessions beyond the limits indicated by its charter, a rival had sprung up in the old North West Company of Montreal.* That association in a few years absorbed into itself all the minor fur-trading associations, and finally by an agreement with the new North West Company, dated 5th June, 1804, the powerful body known simply as the North West Company, was organised and consolidated.

This Company pushing its enterprise across the Rocky Mountains, established its first post on Fraser Lake in the year 1806; then the posts of Kootenais and Flatheads about the year 1808. Thence extending southward it acquired by purchase in October, 1813, from the Pacific Fur Company, the post of Okanagan and a post on the river Spokane, and the post of Astoria, afterwards called Fort George, on the southern shore of the Columbia.†

The rivalry between two bodies, wealthy and powerful as these were, became so violent that it disturbed the peace of the country, and assumed the form of open war.‡ It was indeed so formidable,

* Irving's *Astoria*, p. 19. *Oregon Territory*, Twiss, p. 20. *Greenhow, History of Oregon and California*, p. 260, 261.

† *Greenhow*, 299, n. 303. App. 442. *Twiss*. 21, 25.

‡ *Blue Book, Report Hudson's Bay Co., Ev. of Rt. Hon. E. Ellice*, pp. 223, 224.