

boundary, or the head-water-line, of the grant to the Hudson Bay Company, inasmuch as all these rivers flow northwards, and find their way, through a most intricate navigation, ultimately into Hudson Bay. Of course the grant was limited, if it proved to conflict with a previous grant, or with land in the occupation of other countries. Besides the Hudson Bay Company there was the *Nouvelle France* and the *Louisiana* companies, which had been formed by the French. A great contest arose between us and the French in this part of the country, and the first was concluded by the Treaty of Ryswick, in which the French King recognised the title of William III. to the throne of England; and in return for that William III. recognised what we call the *uti possidetis*, agreeing that the land should remain as it was possessed by the French, no question of right or title being raised. But when we came to the Treaty of Utrecht, in 1713, the French King agreed, not to cede, but to restore, to Queen Anne "all the Bay and Straits of Hudson, and all the coasts, rivers, &c." Commissioners were to be appointed to mark out the boundaries, not landwards, in regard to the sources of rivers, but coastwards; for the real question was, in fact, to determine the extent of Hudson Bay, that portion of water into which these rivers flowed. Those Commissioners were never appointed: consequently no boundary was ever determined under that treaty between the English and French possessions. Now, the question which Captain Syngé raised about the French possessions extending indefinitely northwards, was the great argument used by the United States Government against ourselves in 1846, in connexion with the Oregon boundary, in regard to which it claimed to have succeeded to the French rights in Louisiana, which originally belonged to the French, and who really penetrated as far north as the Athabaska Lake, where Mackenzie, in his first great exploration, discovered the remains of two small French settlements. The Americans claimed 49° as the boundary, alleging that that was the line agreed upon at the Treaty of Utrecht as the boundary between the English and French possessions, and claiming to have succeeded to the French title under that treaty. But in 1763, after the siege of Quebec, when the whole of Canada was ceded to us, the French Governor, the Marquis