

which he intended them to apply. The deflection desired by the United States would give to that Power the principal islands lying at the entrance of Portland Canal, and thereby the command not merely of the inlet, but also of the harbour of Port Simpson in British Columbia, which, by reason of its natural advantages, is destined to become an important commercial and strategic point.

In support of this claim it is argued on the side of the United States that the line, departing from the southernmost point of Prince of Wales Island, should follow along the parallel of $54^{\circ} 40'$, which would bring it in at the mouth of Observatory Inlet. They base their contention on the fact that this latitude is expressly mentioned in the treaty in connexion with the point of commencement, and they urge that the reason of the omission to state that the boundary should proceed along that parallel is that the repetition was considered unnecessary.

The Canadians reply that when in the course of the negotiations of 1823-5 Russia was forced to abandon her extravagant pretensions put forward in the ukase of 1821, she took her stand upon the charter of the Emperor Paul, and claimed down to 55° . To that line she stubbornly adhered throughout. Inasmuch, however, as the parallel of 55° cuts Prince of Wales Island near its southern extremity, the Russian plenipotentiaries proposed that the portion of the island below that line should be included in the Russian possessions. In order to effect this result the starting point was fixed at the southernmost point of Prince of Wales Island, which happens to be in latitude of $54^{\circ} 40'$. Thus the extension to $54^{\circ} 40'$ was merely a local exception to fit a particular case. For similar reasons of convenience the continental line was carried south a few minutes of latitude to Portland Canal, which affords the first natural boundary on the continent south of 55° .

There can be little doubt from the text of the treaty that the southernmost point of Prince of Wales Island and not the parallel of latitude was intended as the point of beginning. The geographical co-ordinates are given for the purposes of identification merely. If they were intended to govern, the wording would be different, for the definition of a point by geographical co-ordinates must be by the intersection of two lines, and not by a parallel of latitude and two meridians seventy-five miles apart. Seeing that the line is to 'ascend 'to the north,' a claim that it is first to run sixty miles due east along a parallel of latitude seems manifestly untenable.