

the instructions we add the practical commentary of Cook's conduct under them. To this we now proceed.

On the 7th of March, 1778, in latitude $44^{\circ} 10'$ north, Captain Cook first saw the "long looked-for coast of New Albion." All their efforts to find a harbor or effect a landing were baffled by tempestuous weather and contrary winds until the 29th, when they found an inlet and safe harbor in latitude $49^{\circ} 33'$; now called Nootka Sound. This point is the same visited and examined by Juan Perez, in 1774, and which he called Port San Lorenzo. Of the natives, Cook says: "They showed great readiness to part with anything they had, and took from us whatever we offered in exchange, but were more desirous of iron than of any other of our articles of commerce, appearing to be perfectly acquainted with the use of that metal. Subsequently, he ascribes "their great dexterity in works of wood to the assistance they receive from iron tools."

Whence did these savages, cannibals, as they are represented, derive their knowledge of the use of iron, and of the mode of converting it into tools? If there be any difficulty in answering this question, there can be none in asserting they did not derive it from the British, for on their arrival they found the iron and tools in common use. Cook, foreseeing that he was exposed to this embarrassing interrogatory, seeks to avoid the only reasonable solution, in referring to the previous visit of the Spaniards, by saying, "Iron being familiar to these people, it was very natural for us to speculate about the mode of its being conveyed to them." In the course of this speculation, he indulges in a variety of conjectures not very probable—as that the iron came from the north. If so, it must have been from the Russians, who, at that period, had not penetrated so far south; or from the English settlements on Hudson's Bay, which may be pronounced impossible. He does not hesitate to assert that the Spaniards (the account of whose visit to this coast in 1774 and 1775 he admits had reached England before he sailed) did not introduce the iron at Nootka Sound. He adds, with great simplicity, that it cannot easily be determined "whether these things be introduced by way of Hudson's Bay and Canada, from the Indians who deal with our traders, and so successively across from one tribe to another, or whether they be brought from the northwestern parts of Mexico in the same manner." He rejects the only probable supposition, that the Spaniards, who unquestionably were there in 1774, left this iron in exchange for skins, and resorts to an idle fancy of its having been transmitted from the English or Spaniards, through the intervention of numerous and hostile tribes of Indians. This iron may have been left by the Spaniards for the same purposes that Cook was directed to leave that, or similar substances—"to remain as traces and evidences of their having been there." Several articles were found, of which the "materials certainly were European"—such as brass ornaments, of which it is said, if not from Canada, they "must have been introduced at Nootka from the quarter of Mexico, from whence no doubt the two silver spoons met with here were originally derived." Here is proof, which cannot be controverted, that Nootka Sound had been previously discovered and visited by another European Power; in which event, by the very terms of his instructions, Cook was prohibited from taking possession. He found in the iron, the tools, the brass ornaments, the silver spoons, "traces and evidences" that the Spaniards had been there. Under these circumstances, he literally obeyed his instructions, took in a supply of "wood and water," and, although he remained there from March 29 to April 26, he gives no intimation of having taken possession in the "name of His Majesty," as he subsequently did when he had proceeded further north. In June following, in latitude $61^{\circ} 30'$, he discovered the mouth of a large river, which, after his death, received his own name. Believing this "river capable of extensive inland navigation," Cook sent Mr. King to the land, "there to display the flag, and take possession of the country and river in His Majesty's name." Having performed this idle ceremony, the expedition prosecuted its northern voyage, in which we have no interest to accompany it. Cook never returned to this part of the coast. We have the opinion of the British ministry of the validity of the title acquired by Cook at this place, in the fact that in 1825 they admitted the Russian possessions to extend as far south as $54^{\circ} 40'$.

We have thus seen that Captain Cook first touched the American shore in the spring of 1778, and could thus acquire no right of possession adverse to that of Spain, whose vessels had visited the same point four years before. If the British,