

sea, from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean ; which anticipated passage used to be projected in the old maps of the seventeenth century by the name of the Straits of Anian.

Hernan Cortes himself set the example of these enterprises, by undertaking several of them at his own charge, and conducting one of them in person, exploring the Gulf of California, and thus leading the way to the settlement of that country, and to the subsequent voyages of the Spaniards and others along the northwestern coast of America. Prior to the visit of any other European power, the Spaniards had prosecuted their discoveries to Cape Mendocin and Cape Blanco, in voyages of unquestionable authenticity. Complete and authentic evidence also exists, that Don Esteban Martinez, in 1774, made the first discovery of the sound of Nootka ; that in 1775 Don Bruno Heceta, Don Juan de Ayala, and Don Juan de la Bodega y Quadra, were the first to discover the bay of the river Columbia, which they called *Entrada de Heceta*.

Though there is not the same authentic evidence of some other voyages of ancient date in that quarter ascribed to Spanish navigators, yet it is at present generally admitted that in 1599 Juan de Fuca discovered and explored the strait which now universally bears his name.

The river Columbia itself was first entered and explored by Captain Robert Gray, of Boston, in the year 1792, in the ship *Columbia*, whose name, applied to the river, also perpetuates the memory of the original discovery.

The first European establishment founded on any part of the northwest coast, from California to the 49th degree of north latitude, was made by Fidalgo, in 1799, on the main land at the entrance of the strait of Juan de Fuca.

Leaving the Pacific, we find that three only of the great European powers acquired a permanent foothold in North America, from the side of the Atlantic.

Spain secured to herself the countries of Mexico extending from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific, and so indefinitely to the northwest ; and also the country of Florida, limited to the northeastern shore of the Gulf.

France obtained the valley of the St. Lawrence on the one hand, and that of the Mississippi on the other ; the whole connected together by the great lakes, and constituting a noble and unique territory, stretching from the northeast to the southwest, in the rear of the English settlements on the Atlantic, restricted by them on the east, but extending westward indefinitely towards the Pacific and the possessions of Spain.

England got possession of the region of country on the Atlantic, extending from the neighborhood of the St. Lawrence on the northeast, to Florida on the south, and westward indefinitely, in conflict with the claims of France in that direction. England also established herself in the waters of Hudson's bay, with a claim extending into the interior indefinitely, in conflict with the claims of France along the St. Lawrence and the great lakes.

Whatever rights, be the same more or less, were held by Spain in the northwest, have, as already stated, been expressly ceded to the United States by Spain and by the Mexican republic.

Whatever rights Great Britain had in virtue of her possessions between the St. Lawrence and Florida, she recognised as vested in the United States by the treaty concluded at Paris the 3d September, 1783, commonly called the "treaty of peace ;" acknowledging the said States to be free, sovereign,