

to Mr. Robert Campbell's letter. In the early part of 1848 I had the honor, by the instructions of her Majesty's government, to propose to the government of the United States to name a joint commission for the purpose of making out the northwest boundary, and more particularly that part of it in the neighborhood of Vancouver's island; in regard to which, as you will perceive from a reference to my note of the 13th January of that year to the honorable James Buchanan, the Secretary of State of the United States, her Majesty's government already foresaw the possibility of the occurrence of misunderstanding between the settlers of the respective nations; and her Majesty's government, moreover, then proposed, in order at once to preclude such misunderstandings, that before instructing their respective commissioners the two governments should agree to adopt as the "channel" designated by the treaty that marked by Vancouver in his charts as the navigable channel, and laid down with the soundings by that navigator.

MARCY.

Mr. Buchanan, entirely concurring in the expediency of losing no time in determining that portion of the boundary line, nevertheless felt some objection to adopting the channel marked by Vancouver as the "channel" designated by the treaty, in the absence of more accurate geographical information; and he suggested that the joint commissioners when appointed should be, in the first place, instructed to survey the region in question for the purpose of ascertaining whether the channel marked by Vancouver, or some other channel as yet unexplored between the numerous islands of the gulf of Georgia, should be adopted as the channel designated by the treaty, or, in other words, should be found to be the main channel, through the middle of which, according to the generally admitted principle, the boundary line should be run.

To this suggestion her Majesty's government, in the hope that immediate measures would be taken by the government of the United States to name commissioners to proceed to the spot with those already designated by the British government, made no objection.

It has been a subject of regret to her Majesty's government that, from causes upon which it is unnecessary to dwell, no appointment of commissioner has, up to the present time, been made by the government of the United States, and I am now instructed again to press this matter on their earnest attention.

Should it appear probable, however, that this proposal cannot be met by the government of the United States without further difficulty or delay, I would again suggest the expediency of the adoption, by both governments, of the channel marked as the only known navigable channel by Vancouver as that designated by the treaty. It is true that the island of San Juan, and perhaps some others of the group of small islands by which the bay of Georgia is studded, would thus be included within British territory; on the other hand, it is to be considered that the islands in question are of very small value, and that the existence of another navigable channel, broader and deeper than that laid down by Vancouver, by the adoption of which some of those islands might possibly fall within the jurisdiction of the United States is, according to the reports of the most recent navigators in that region, extremely improbable; while on the other hand, the continued exist-