effect to divide this sheet or volume of water into two equal quantities, whether superficial or cubic, would be equally a "middle" line, yet the first and most ready interpretation of the phraseology here used by the parties, would seem to point to a line run longitudinally through this water communication, in such a direction as to be always midway or equidistant from the two opposite shores. Were this chain of water communication straight and of uniform size, or its shores but moderately curved and irregular, and, at the same time, were it free from islands, this equidistant line might conveniently be, and probably would have been, adopted as the boundary. But a moment's inspection of the maps accompanying this report will exhibit such irregularities in the size, shape, and direction of this body of water, as to render the application of this principle inconvenient and ridiculous, if not utterly impracticable. This water communication, although composed of one continuous sheet, assumes in its progress an endless diversity of shapes and courses—sometimes expanding into lakes and bays, several hundred miles in breadth, and at others contracted and contorted into a narrow and crooked river or strait, pursuing by turns every point of the compass, and presenting numerous cases where, from the peculiar conformation of the opposite shores, an equidistant line seems to be wholly impracticable. One of these cases (and it often occurs) is where the curvature or indentation of a shore is so deep and sudden as to form (when represented by straight lines) an angle of less than ninety degrees; another, where the river divides into two channels, which part, and take opposite directions; or where one or both of these channels take a direction retrograde from the general course of the river; or where there is but one channel, and the opposite sides assume all these varying and contradictory courses. An insuperable practical objection to this line arises from the difficulty, if not impossibility, of determining, in cases like those above mentioned, what are opposite points, and, of course, where must be the middle of a river. If the general course of a lake, water communication, or river, (in other words, a straight line drawn from one end of it to the other,) be assumed as the basis of operation, and those are to be called opposite points of the shores which are touched by any line drawn at right angles with this *general* course, a boundary or middle line will be produced, that will be constantly invading and cutting off portions of the main shore itself. Such an absurdity may be produced even in a broad and (as regards its general course) straight lake, as is shown in the following diagram.