

III.—EXPLORATIONS OF THE NORTH- WEST COAST OF THE UNITED STATES.

REPORT ON THE CLAIMS OF THE HEIRS OF CAP- TAINS KENDRICK AND GRAY.

[The history of the earliest explorations, discoveries, and purchases of the Indian titles on the North-west coast of North America is most concisely given in the following Report, presented to the Senate of the United States by a Senator from Michigan, ex-Governor Felch, in the First Session of the Thirty-second Congress. References are therein made to other Reports, made at other Sessions, which are printed in the volumes of Senate Documents.]

The heirs of the enterprising merchants of Boston who projected those early voyages of discovery and commerce, and the widow of Captain Gray, who discovered and entered the mouth of the Columbia-river, have repeatedly petitioned Congress for some remuneration for the heavy expenditures and losses incurred in those voyages which brought so much honor to the country and such large acquisitions of valuable territory. The several Committees, to whom these Memorials were referred, brought in their favorable Reports, accompanied with Bills, none of which have progressed to their passage before the adjournment of the several Congresses

which had considered the subject; and nothing remains, as a recompense for the outlay and the purchased territory of the enterprising discoverers and of those who sent them out, but the empty honor which this Report and other similar papers secure to them.

Among those who most earnestly supported the just claims for remuneration of those who thus memorialized the Congress was the distinguished President of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Hon. Robert C. Winthrop.—*EDITH HISTORICAL MAGAZINE.*

Mr. Felch made the following Report, (to accompany bill S. No. 526.—The Committee to whom was referred the Memorial of George Barrell and S. V. S. Wilder, in behalf of themselves and other heirs of the owners of the ship *Columbia* and sloop *Washington*, and the heirs of Captain John Kendrick, and Martha Gray, widow of Captain Robert Gray, praying the confirmation of their title to certain lands purchased of the Indian tribes, in 1791, on the Northwest coast of America; or such compensation as Congress shall deem just and proper for their explorations and discoveries in those regions, have had the same under consideration and make the following Report:

The memorialists represent, that, in the year 1787, a voyage of discovery and mercantile adventure was planned and undertaken by Joseph Barrell, Samuel Brown, Charles Bulfinch, John Derby, Crowell Hatch and John M. Pintard, who fitted out and despatched two vessels from the port of Boston, Massachusetts, to the Northwest coast of America—the one a ship, called the *Columbia*, commanded by Captain John Kendrick, and the other a sloop, called the *Washington*, commanded by Captain Robert Gray—which was the first voyage ever undertaken by citizens of the United States to the Northwest portion of this Continent; that so remarkable was the expedition considered, at that day, that medals, both of silver and copper, were struck, bearing on one side the representation of the vessels, encircled by their names, and, on the other, the names of the owners, with the date; that these vessels sailed from Boston on the first of October, 1787, and arrived at Nootka-sound, in the month of September, 1788; that they continued on the coast until the Summer of 1789, when Captain Gray re-discovered the Straits of St. Juan de Fuca, which he penetrated and explored before any English vessel had ever sailed upon its waters; that, on the third of July, 1789, they exchanged masters—Captain Gray, taking command of the *Columbia*, returned home; that, on the twenty-seventh of September, 1790, he sailed on a second voyage and cruised upon the Northwest coast till September, 1791, when he returned to Cloyquat, for winter-quarters; when in the village of Clicksclootsee, twelve miles from the sea, he built a fort, and called it "Fort Defiance," which he mounted with