

In opposition to this it is urged, that the boundaries of Louisiana never extended beyond the sources of the Missouri and Mississippi, or, at the farthest, beyond the east of the Rocky Mountains, and also the opinion of President Jefferson, (no mean authority) under whose auspices the acquisition of Louisiana was accomplished,

In a letter written by him in August, 1803, are to be found the following words:—

"The boundaries (of Louisiana), which I deem not admitting question, are the high lands on the western side of the Mississippi, enclosing all its waters (the Missouri of course), and terminating in the line drawn from the north-west point of the Lake of the Woods to the nearest source of the Mississippi, as lately settled between Great Britain and the United States."

"In another and more formal document, dated in July, 1807—that is to say, nearly a year after the return of Lewis and Clarke from their expedition to the Pacific, and fifteen years after Gray had entered the Columbia River—is recorded Mr. Jefferson's opinion of the impolicy of giving offence to Spain by any intimation that the claims of the United States extended to the Pacific; and we have the authority of an American historian, distinguished for the attention and research which he has bestowed on the whole subject of the Oregon Territory, for concluding that the western boundaries of Louisiana, as it was ceded by France to the United States, were those indicated by nature—namely, the high lands separating the waters of the Mississippi from those falling into the Pacific." *Vide official Correspondence.*

#### AMERICAN CLAIMS FROM DISCOVERY, &c.

The claim of the American government on the ground of discovery, is based on the alleged discovery of the River Columbia by Gray, in 1792. But that river was known long before Gray's voyage—and his giving the name of his ship to the river is no proof of discovery whatever, as before that time the river was described in Spanish Charts as the *St. Roc*. This pretended discovery of Gray was in no way official or followed by any mark of recognition by the American government; for so late as the year 1826, the American plenipotentiaries in London remarked;—"With respect to the mouth of the Columbia river, we know nothing of Gray's discoveries but through the British accounts." The claim to the Oregon by virtue of this alleged discovery of Gray on the assumption that *the claim of discovery in case of a river extends to the region drained by it* is opposed on the following reasons:—

a. On the discovery of the waters of the Columbia by Carver, in 1768, which is undisputed; and  
b. On the discovery of Frazer's River by Sir Alexander Mackenzie, in 1792, which is also undisputed. If the former assumption of the right of discovery of a river extends to the entire region drained by it be allowed in the case of Gray, it also holds good in the case of Frazer's river, and the head waters of the Columbia, and, therefore, the American offer of the 49<sup>th</sup> is, in fact, no compromise whatever, as the region north of that degree is drained by the head waters of the Columbia and Frazer's river.

2nd. On the explorations of Lewis and Clarke in 1805, and their discovery of the South branch of the Columbia.

To this claim it is urged, that this discovery could give no better title, if so good, as the discovery of Mackenzie in 1792; or Thompson in 1811.

4th. On the settlement of Astoria. To this is replied, that the British North West Fur Company had settlements in Oregon in 1806, and that Astoria was sold to the above company during the last war and has remained in its possession to the present time.

THE BRITISH CLAIMS TO OREGON will be obvious from the replies to those of America. They may be thus briefly stated:—

1st. From the rights which Great Britain held in common with Spain not only over Oregon, but that part of California north of the harbour of St. Francisco; which were acknowledged in the Nootka Convention, in 1790, and ratified by the treaty of Madrid, in 1814.

2nd. From the Discoveries of Drake in 1580, of Cook in 1776, of Captains Berkeley and Duncan in 1787, from the settlement at Nootka in 1788, from the discoveries of Vancouver and Broughton in 1792, of Mackenzie in the same year, and of Thompson in 1811.

3rd. From a continuous occupation from 1788.

4th. From a threefold greater contiguity than the United States.

In this negotiation Great Britain offered, in addition to former propositions, to make free to America any ports, either on Vancouver's Island or on the coast, and also a separate portion of territory on the north of the river; America withdrew the former offer to make free the navigation of the Oregon river to both nations.

In December last negotiations were again opened at Washington by an offer from the British Minister to refer the dispute to the arbitration of any Sovereign or State to be agreed upon by the contending parties; or if there should be an objection to a crowned head, to a mixed commission with an umpire, or a board of legal commissioners. The American Government replied, that if it would arbitrate at all, it would never consent to any other question than that of Title; and, further, that the claims and interests of the United States will not admit of arbitration.

On the 9th ult. the American House of Representatives, by a majority of 168 to 54, Resolved that the President of the United States cause notice to be given to the Government of Great Britain that the convention for the joint occupation of Oregon be abrogated and annulled at the expiration of twelve months.

This is the present state of the question. The violent speeches of Allen and Quincy Adams, and the popular war cry *The Whole Oregon or None*, give little hope for peace—come what may England has done her utmost to great