

Fundy, the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the Baie des Chaleurs and the St. Lawrence River respectively.

The difficulty was worse than before. By this time the troubles at the disputed frontier had become very serious. The New Brunswickers and Maine people came in competition and collision in the upper valleys of the St. John and Aroostock. Both governments issued timber licenses in the disputed territory. The danger became more pressing each season.

Attempts at settlement by negotiation were resumed and then occurred to England one of those instances of a neglected opportunity, which, once lost, never returns.

In 1833, when Lord Palmerston was Foreign Secretary, a proposition was submitted on the part of the United States by General Jackson, then President. It admitted, as the King of Holland had decided, that a due north line from the St. Croix was not reconcilable with the other words of the description, and proposed that the line should be drawn from St. Croix to the highlands at the sources of the Kennebec and Chaudiere, regardless of the point of the compass. It did not use these words, but this would have been the effect. The actual terms of the proposal are too lengthy for repetition here. The result of survey by the American proposal would certainly have given the line as now stated. The proposition was later denounced by the hotter Americans as too liberal, but that only proved that it should have been accepted at once. On the contrary, Lord Palmerston pigeon-holed the dispatch for many months and then rejected it, because it did not profess to be made with the consent of Maine. This was not his affair, for had England and the United States come to terms, England could have allowed them to settle the question with the energetic Maine people. The proposition was naturally never renewed.

On the disputed frontier there was something very near to war. This was happily averted by an American officer, who in later years was much sneered at as "Old Fuss and Feathers," but who was a good soldier in his day—General Winfield Scott. He arranged with the British authorities for joint occupation and a funding of the revenues of the disputed territory until some settlement should be made.

At last in 1842 England determined apparently that the matter must be settled at whatever cost, and Lord Ashburton was sent out with the fullest powers to conclude a treaty upon this and many other matters. We will, however, limit ourselves to the matters of boundary.

He was selected partly because of his connection in business with America,—he was of the banking house of Barings,—he had married in America, and knew many leading

people in the States. He was an honourable man, but further was unfitted for his mission. He had had no diplomatic training or experience. He was a good natured but weak man. He whom he had to meet was the astute Daniel Webster, of vigorous and overbearing mind,—a man of great experience in legal ways and diplomatic matters.

Lord Ashburton was fêted for some weeks before he opened his negotiations and reached a state which seems to have made him ready to yield every point to his hospitable entertainers, which his friend Mr. Webster should press; for when the result of the Ashburton Treaty was published it was found that Lord Ashburton had on every point yielded to the overpowering will of his adversary, and that the treaty well merited the term "Ashburton Capitulation" which Lord Palmerston applied to it. From him, however, the expression came with bad grace when it was remembered how he had passed a golden chance a few years before.

By the Treaty Lord Ashburton had settled the Maine question. But how? By an abandonment of the greater and best part of the disputed territory. It was called a compromise, but Mr. Dent has said, it bore a striking resemblance to the immortal Irishman's reciprocity, which was all on one side. True the United States took 5000 square miles less than then claimed by Maine, but the relinquished part was for most part sterile waste. Lord Ashburton gave up a territory of much greater area, in great part fertile and well timbered. It included the valley of the Aroostock and half of that of the St. John which had already become and has since proved itself a district unsurpassed as a lumber country; and with further obligingness he granted the free navigation of the St. John to the sea to the lumbermen of Maine with their timber which should have remained British. And yet what writes Lord Ashburton in one of his letters to Mr. Croker recently published:—"I daresay your little farm is worth the whole pine-swamp I have been discussing."

The boundary now gives a line which makes Maine look like a mouthful bitten out of Canada's cake by a greedy boy. Look at it on the map. See the effect, all plans for the Intercolonial R. R. then in progress across what now became Maine had to be abandoned, the enterprise delayed for years, and the length of the road when built nearly doubled. The insertion of Maine, wedge-like between the provinces, is again coming prominently into notice in connection with the recent proposals for the "Short Line" railway from Montreal to Halifax and St. John.

The signatures to his treaty were barely dry,—Lord Ashburton's fêtes in the U. S. over—and he safely away—when a curious matter came to light, which to most minds, not