

Nootka Sound, the parties separated, and no surrender was in fact made. For the particulars of the correspondence between Captain Vancouver and Señor Quadra, relative to the surrender, the committee refers to the 2nd volume of Vancouver's voyage. For an account of the transactions which led to the Nootka convention, and the true meaning and effect of that convention, the committee refers to the report of Mr. Cushing and the Memoir of Mr. Greenhow.

On the 14th of December, 1790, Mr. Duncombe, in the House of Commons, moved an address to his majesty on the Nootka convention. The following extract from that address will show what the minister claimed to have acquired by that convention:

"They (the House of Commons) are eager to embrace the first opportunity of offering to his majesty their cordial congratulations on so satisfactory an issue of the late negotiation, which has continued to these kingdoms the blessings of peace, has maintained the honor of his majesty's crown, by providing an adequate reparation for the violence which was committed at Nootka, and has secured to His Majesty's subjects the exercise of their navigation, commerce, and fisheries, in those parts of the world which were the subject of discussion."

Mr. Fox opposed this address, and the following extracts from his speech will show his estimate of these acquisitions:

"In the early part of the debate we had heard nothing but rhodomontade about acquisition, nothing but of new sources of trade, new objects of enterprise, new oceans and new continents opened to the activity of our merchants and the courage of our sailors. Such flowers of rhetoric were elegant embellishments, equally convenient to give force to argument or to conceal the want of it. But was it true that we had opened any of those sources, or made a single acquisition? An honorable gentleman, who spoke immediately before him, had put the question upon its true grounds. Having caught the contagion of the speakers who preceded him on the same side, he had talked of gaining and acquiring; but, in the progress of his argument, he had very properly stated that we had acquired nothing, but only obtained security for what we possessed before."

"What, then, was the extent of our rights before the convention, and to what extent were they now secured to us? We possessed and exercised the free navigation of the Pacific Ocean, without restraint or limitation; we possessed and exercised the right of carrying on fisheries in the South Seas, equally unlimited. This estate we had, and were daily improving; it was not to be disgraced by the name of an acquisition. The admission of part of these rights by Spain was all we had obtained. It remained to inquire what it cost. Our right before was to settle in any part of South or Northwest America not fortified against us by previous occupancy; and we are now restricted to settle in certain places only, and under certain restrictions. This was an important concession on our part; our rights of fishing extended to the whole ocean; and now it too was limited, and to be carried on within certain distances of the Spanish settlements. Our right of making settlements was not, as now, a right to build huts, but to plant colonies if we thought proper. Surely these were not acquisitions."

Speaking of the indefinite limits of Spanish America, he says:

"On this point we have gained nothing. We have renounced the right of permanent settlement on the whole extent of South America, and where the admitted right of settlement on the Northwest coast commenced was completely undefined; it was said at Nootka, but we did not know that Nootka would be restored."

"By the third article, we are authorized to navigate the Pacific Ocean and South Seas unmolested, for the purpose of carrying on our fisheries, and to land on the unsettled coasts, for the purpose of trading with the natives but after this pompous recognition of right to navigation, fishery, and commerce, comes another article, (the sixth,) which takes away all right of landing and erecting even temporary huts for any purpose but that of carrying on the fishery, and amounts to a complete dereliction of all right to settle in any way for the purpose of commerce with the natives."

"In renouncing all right to make settlements in South America, we had given to Spain what she considered as inestimable, and had in return been contented with dross."