

Great Britain and the United States, it is agreed that the 49th parallel of north latitude shall be the line of demarcation of their respective territories, from the north-western point of the Lake-of-the-Woods to the Stony Mountains. In 1824 and 1826, the United States proposed to Great Britain to adopt this same 49th parallel of latitude as the line between their respective territories, from the Rocky Mountains west to the Pacific Ocean. To this proposal the British ministry refused to accede, and in their turn proposed "that the boundary between the territories of Great Britain and those of the United States west of the Rocky Mountains should be a line drawn from those mountains westward, along the 49th parallel, to the nearest headwaters of the Columbia, and thence down the middle of the stream to its termination in the Pacific—the British possessing the country north and west of such line, and the Americans that on the other side." This proposal the United States rejected, on the ground that it gave Great Britain territory south of the forty-ninth degree of latitude. The negotiation having thus failed, in 1827, Mr. Gallatin, the American minister, was directed to give notice that the "American Government did not hold itself bound hereafter, in consequence of any proposal which it had made for a line of separation between the territories of the two nations beyond the Rocky Mountains, but would consider itself at liberty to contend for the full extent of the claims of the United States." All efforts to settle by negotiation the conflicting claims of the two nations to the territory in question having failed, each is left to assert its right in such manner as its own honor and interest shall dictate.

The committee submits a brief abstract of the title of the United States, referring, for a more full and general view of it, to the several reports heretofore made to both Houses of Congress, to the correspondence with Great Britain, and an interesting memoir prepared in 1840, by Mr. Robert Greenhow, under the direction of the Hon. John Forsyth, then Secretary of State.*

The United States claim the territory in question in virtue of their own original discovery and possession, and as successors of France and Spain under the Louisiana and Florida treaties. The committee is therefore led to the investigation of the titles thus acquired; and, first,

OF THE FRENCH TITLE.

The treaty of Utrecht was concluded in 1713. By the tenth article it was agreed, between Great Britain and France, to determine within one year, by commissioners, the limits between the Hudson's Bay and the places appertaining to the French. The same commissioners were also authorized to settle, in like manner, the boundaries between the other British and French colonies in those parts. Commissioners were accordingly appointed by the two Powers, and there is strong reason to believe they actually established the boundaries according to the terms of the treaty, although no formal record of the fact now exists. The evidence that the boundaries were thus established is, first, the fact of the appointment of the commissioners for that express purpose; and that two distinct lines may be found traced on the different maps published in the last century, each purporting to be the limit between the Hudson's Bay territories on the north and the French possessions on the south, fixed by commissioners according to the treaty of Utrecht. One of these lines "is drawn irregularly from the Atlantic to a point in the 49th parallel of latitude, south of the southernmost part of the Hudson's Bay, and thence westward along that parallel to Red

* The first report upon "the expediency of occupying the Columbia River" was made by Mr. Floyd, of Virginia, to the House of Representatives, January 25, 1821, accompanied by a bill for that purpose. (House Doc. 1820—21, No. 45.) The second report came from a select committee, of which Mr. Baylies, of Massachusetts, was chairman, to which had been referred the subject of establishing a military post at the mouth of the Columbia River, etc., January 16, 1823. (Ho. Doc., 1823—24, vol. 1, No. 23.) The third report was made by Mr. Cushing, of Massachusetts, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, in relation to the territory of the United States beyond the Rocky Mountains, January 4, 1839; and a supplemental report, February 16, 1839. (Ho. Doc., vol. 1, No. 101.) The fourth report was made to the Senate, by Mr. Lynn, of Missouri, from the select committee to which was referred the bill to authorize the President to occupy the Oregon Territory, June 6, 1838. (Senate Doc., No. 470.) The memoir of Mr. Greenhow was printed by order of the Senate, and is to be found in Senate Doc. 1830—40, vol. 4, No. 174.