

precision by inquiring of her distinguished statesmen as you can the rate of exchange at a given point by inquiring at the counter of a bank. How this may be I have not been there to inquire. But sure I am, that the undying fires of patriotism are yet smouldering in the land of Marion, of Pinckney, and of Sumner, and that they need but a proper occasion to give them vent. Should war come, (which I cannot for a moment believe,) those who now differ with us as to the policy of this measure, will, I doubt not, be amongst the first to kindle the watch-fires upon the altar of liberty. Let us therefore, on this occasion, not be intolerant towards each other; but while reposing a generous confidence, cultivate the kindlier and better feelings of our nature.

Our title to this territory is the pivot upon which the whole question must turn. It constitutes the very essence, soul, and life of the controversy. Some persons will deem it supererogation, at this stage of the discussion, to pause for a moment to prove our title, for the reason that both of the great political parties of this country concede it to be good and valid. That would do, if this country alone were concerned in the result. But I apprehend, that if the whig and tory parties in England should concede that we had no just claim to Oregon, we would not by any means regard that as conclusive proof of the fact.

If it can be established that we have a good and valid title to all or any portion of Oregon, it settles the question as to our duty, and as to our course, to the extent of the territory to which we are thus entitled. For if any of it is ours, we must hold it, or else yield it from fear of Great Britain. We cannot do the latter; for the act—craven and dishonorable in itself—would dissolve the charm and break the spring of our success as a nation.

Much has been well and justly said of the rapacity, injustice, and grasping ambition of Great Britain. Though she may be regarded by other nations as the "beast with seven heads and ten horns," and though her iniquities toward them and us may, and indeed have, accumulated with each succeeding year; yet it all avails nothing in this controversy, if the territory belongs to her, and not to us. Therefore, I proceed to examine the different elements of our title.

By the Florida treaty of the 22d of February, 1819, we obtained all the rights which Spain then had to that country north of 42°, whether accruing from discovery, exploration or occupation; and they are as follows: From the time of the discovery by Columbus, in 1492, the Spanish Government never rested till they had explored the whole Pacific coast. In 1520, Fernando Magellan, in the service of Spain, discovered and sailed through the highly important and far-famed Straits of Magellan, which received and yet bear his name. In 1528, the celebrated Cortes, who was appointed by Charles V. as captain-general of New Spain, (now Mexico,) fitted out a vessel under the command of Maldonado, one of his officers, who was absent for six months, cruising in the Pacific. In 1532, he despatched two vessels, one under the command of Mendoza, and the other commanded by Mazuela, who sailed as far as the 27th degree of north latitude; and the country thus visited was

claimed by Cortes for Spain, and afterwards received the name of California.

The northernmost point occupied in 1530 on the Pacific by any civilized nation, was "Culiacan, which was founded by Nuno de Guzman, a Spaniard, at the entrance of the Gulf of California."

The last expedition made by order of Cortes was commanded by Francisco de Ulloa, who took his departure on the 8th of July, 1539, from Acapulco. He discovered an island near the coast under the 28th parallel of latitude, which was named the Isle of Cedars. In 1543 Bartolome Perelo, a Spaniard, under the authority of the Viceroy of Mexico, on the 25th of February of that year, discovered the Cape of Perils or Stormy cape, under the 41st parallel, which is supposed to be the place now called Mendocino; and on the 1st of March he had reached as far north as the 44th parallel of latitude—certainly as far as the 43d.

The Straits of Fuca, which enter the land at 48° 24', and return to the ocean at 51°, were discovered in 1592 by Juan de Fuca, under Spanish authority, whose name they now bear; he sailed in and remained there more than twenty days, trading with the natives. In 1603 Cape Blanco, in latitude 43°, and the river Umpqua, in latitude 44°, were discovered by Ensign Martin de Aquilar, who was acting under the Spanish authority.

An expedition was fitted out in 1774, by order of the Spanish Government, under the command of Ensign Juan Perez, accompanied by Estavan Martinez as his pilot, with directions to sail as far north as 60°, and to survey the coast from thence southward to Monterey; and for them to take possession in the name of the King of Spain.

On the 18th of July, 1774, Perez reached as far north as the 54th parallel of latitude, and discovered land to the east, to which he gave the name of cape Santa Margarita.

He made land on the 9th of August in the same year, under the parallel of 49° 30', anchored in a deep bay, and traded freely with the Indians, and called the place Port San Lorenzo; and it is undoubtedly the same which four years afterwards received from Captain Cook the appellation of King George's sound, but now known as Nootka sound—the name given it by the natives.

On the 15th of August, 1775, Heceta discovered the bay at the mouth of Columbia river, in latitude 46° 17', but was prevented by the force of the current from entering the mouth of the river.

Bodega and Maurell proceeded in August, 1775, as far north as the 58th parallel of latitude, and took possession of the country in the name of the Spanish King. St. Salvador Diego, in the fall of 1790, explored the Russian possessions. These, together with many other voyages and explorations, here omitted for want of space, prove most clearly that, so far as discovery is concerned, Spain is greatly in advance of all other nations; and that her navigators had visited the whole coast of the Pacific as far north as the 61st parallel of latitude, long prior to those of any other nation.

The first navigator from whose discoveries Great Britain could derive any title on the northwest coast of America is Captain Cook, who, in March, 1778, visited Cape Flattery, in the 48th parallel of latitude; but he did not discover the mouth of the