

consequence of the oblate formation of the earth, would be pushed back again towards the north. They therefore declared in favour of geocentric measurement. To do them justice they grew ashamed of this argument by the time the case went before the King of the Netherlands, and developed another theory, but both the minor questions referred to in the convention of 1827 were decided in our favour.

In reference to the principal question, the King declared that no definite decision could be given—that neither the highlands claimed by Great Britain nor the highlands claimed by the United States corresponded with the description given in the treaty. Further examination of the country, as we shall presently see, led to the discovery of facts which, if they had been before the King of the Netherlands, in 1827, might probably have induced him to give a plain decision in our favour, but his actual verdict was that a compromise line ought to be adopted, and he traced a compromise line which he considered to be fair. No sooner was this decision published than the American Minister at the Hague, Mr. Prebble, a citizen of Maine, protested against it. He said the King had no right under the terms of the conference to compromise the dispute. The English Government regretted the compromise, and considered it extremely unfavourable to us, but bowed loyally to the arbitration, and prepared to carry it out. The American Government, on the other hand, demurred, and after some delay, in 1829, finally rejected and repudiated the arbitration. After some attempts of a rather Quixotic character to induce the American Government in the general interests of good faith to reconsider its resolution, the English Government gave up the point a year or two later, and consented to regard the arbitration as null and void.

By degrees, as geographical information relating to the territory in dispute accumulated in the hands of the British Government, our case became enormously strengthened. In 1839 we sent out two surveyors, Colonel Mudge and Mr. Featherstonhaugh, to examine the country. Their report, and another procured in 1841, determined various facts. The point at which the American Commissioners had declared that the due north line ought to stop and the boundary be diverted to the west, turned out not to be in a range of highlands at all, but in a marshy plain. The highlands selected to suit American views of what the boundary ought to have been, had to be sought some distance to the westward. Secondly, these highlands did not divide rivers flowing into

the St. Lawrence from rivers flowing into the Atlantic, unless it were assumed that the St. John was a river flowing into the Atlantic. Now the King of the Netherlands, in his arbitration had, at all events, confirmed our opinion concerning the true character to be attributed to the River St. John. It flows into the Bay of Fundy, and for the purposes of the treaty of 1783, the Bay of Fundy is not a part of the Atlantic Ocean. So we always contended, and so the King of the Netherlands declared. The common sense of that view will appear to anyone who examines the map. The St. John stretches across the whole country lying between the Atlantic and the St. Lawrence. It is the only river which does this, whereas there are many shorter streams flowing from the central highlands into the St. Lawrence on the north, and into the Atlantic on the south. Moreover, even as the boundary was proposed by the Americans, the lower course of the St. John must still have lain within British territory. According to the interpretation which this government clearly proved to be fair and reasonable, no part of the St. John would ever have belonged to the United States at all. The river should have been left out of the calculations of the commissioners altogether; and it certainly was not an Atlantic river under the terms of the treaty. This was our contention, and this was the view distinctly confirmed by the King of the Netherlands. The utter worthlessness of the American claim in reference to the northern range of highlands will now be apparent. The highlands we claimed, on the other hand, were proved by the examination made by Colonel Mudge and Mr. Featherstonhaugh to be, in fact, all that the treaty required them to be. They were struck by the due north line, and they were continuous from that line to the head waters of the Connecticut, a merit not possessed by the northern range, which soon sank into the plain as it was followed to the westward, leaving the boundary to be carried across a level country for twenty-five miles. Finally, our highlands did indisputably divide streams flowing into the St. Lawrence from streams flowing into the Atlantic Ocean.

We are thus precise in explaining the points that were really at issue in the boundary dispute, because the interest of these negotiations, regarded from our present point of view, centres in the spirit shown by the American Government, and this cannot rightly be appreciated unless the merits of the controversy are understood.

It will be seen that when Lord Ashburton was appointed by Sir Robert Peel in 1842

to proceed to Washington, the difficulties of the dispute was one of its chief objects of its mission, would not be neutral territory, it accurately Government by virtue of letter was a neutral nation; it pushed the lying about the tributary had been in the community, the Indian, which extension and transferred States. The first encroachment they wished all particular treaty. Noting the position in which it could have been out being a violation to effect a issue.

But the British Government instruction was, that our rights United States was very clearly declared northern favourable this country was too in would not be a frontier was that natives be under of the surre line not suggested the of the means are quite ament more fav