

as far north as the Jasper's House Pass, but not including that remarkable valley, the project was unfavourably reported upon by the leader of the expedition.

The reasons adduced in support of this view were strong ones. Not only had the unfortunate selection of an astronomical boundary-line (the 49th parallel) shut us out from the western extreme of Lake Superior, and left us the Laurentian wilderness lying north of that lake, as a threshold to the fertile lands of the Saskatchewan and the Red River; but far away to the west of the Rocky Mountains, and extending to the very shores of the Pacific, there lay a land of rugged mountains almost insurmountable to railroad enterprise.

Such was the substance of the Report of the expedition. It would be a long, long story now to enter into the details involved in this question; but one fact connected with "this unfortunate selection of an astronomical line" may here be pertinently alluded to, as evincing the spirit of candour, and the tendency to sharp practice which the Great Republic early developed in its dealings with its discarded mother. By the treaty of 1783, the northern limit of the United States was defined as running from the north-west angle of the Lake of the Woods to the river Mississippi along the 49th parallel; but as we have before stated, the 49th parallel did not touch the north-west angle of the Lake of the Woods or the river Mississippi; the former lay north of it, the latter south. Here was clearly a case for a new arrangement. As matters stood we had unquestionably the best of the mistake; for, whereas the angle of the Lake of the Woods lay only a few miles north of the parallel, the extreme source of the Mississippi lay a long, long way south of it: so that if we lost ten miles at the beginning of the line, we would gain 100 or more at the end of it.

All this did not escape the eyes of the fur-hunters in the