

condition, by the way, which Meares dishonestly failed to fulfil, for the boards were struck off and taken on board one of his vessels, and the roof was given to Captain Kendrick.

It was on the ground of these charters, together with the application of their rule to the pretended discovery of the Columbia river by Vancouver and Meares, that we felt warranted in asserting, on the 31st page, that Great Britain advances the principle herself, over the tract of country watered by the Mississippi and its tributaries.

But, can such charters be considered an acknowledged part of the law of nations? Were they any thing more, in fact, than a cession, of grantee or grantees, of whatever rights the grantor might suppose himself to possess, to the exclusion of other subjects of the same sovereign—charters binding and restraining those only who were within the jurisdiction of the grantor, and of no force or validity against the subjects of other states, until recognised by treaty, and thereby becoming a part of international law.

Had the United States thought proper to issue, in 1790, by virtue of their national authority, a charter granting to Mr. Gray the whole extent of country watered, directly or indirectly, by the river Columbia,* such a charter would no doubt have been valid in Mr. Gray's favor, as against all other citizens of the United States.

But, can it be supposed that it would have been acquiesced in by either of the powers, Great Britain and Spain, which, in that same year, were preparing to contest by arms the possession of the very country which would have been the subject of such a grant?

If the right of sovereignty over the territory in question accrues to the United States by Mr. Gray's discovery, how happens it that they never protested against the violence done to that right by the two powers, who, by the convention of 1790, regulated their respective rights in and over a district so belonging, as it is now asserted, to the United States?

This claim of the United States to the territory drained by the Columbia and its tributary streams, on the ground of one of their citizens having been the first to discover the entrance of that river, has been here so far entered into, not because it is considered to be necessarily entitled to notice, since the whole country watered by the Columbia

*These Englishmen are crazy; the Columbia was not discovered by Capt. Gray till 1792. If the above is intended as an illustration only, the instance is as weak as the previous arguments are inconclusive.

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