

Lord Ashburton and Mr. Webster, which resulted in the Treaty of 1842, the American Plenipotentiaries argued upon the relative importance to the two countries, of the territory then in dispute; Her Majesty's Government admitted the value of that argument, and acted upon it. The same language was employed in 1846, upon the Oregon question, and on both occasions the United States obtained the larger portion of the territory in dispute; their Plenipotentiaries successfully arguing that it was of greater value to the United States than it could be to Great Britain.

Upon the present occasion this state of things is reversed; the adoption of the Central Channel would give to Great Britain the Island of San Juan, which is believed to be of little or no value to the United States, while much importance is attached by British Colonial Authorities and by Her Majesty's Government to its retention as a dependency of the Colony of Vancouver's Island.

Her Majesty's Government must therefore, under any circumstances, maintain the right of the British Crown to the Island of San Juan: the interests at stake in connection with the retention of that island are too important to admit of compromise; and your Lordship will consequently bear in mind that, whatever arrangement as to the boundary line is finally arrived at, no settlement of the question will be accepted by Her Majesty's Government which does not provide for the Island of San Juan being reserved to the British Crown.

Your Lordship will bring to the consideration of this question the same conciliatory spirit and frank and straightforward bearing which have distinguished you on previous occasions; and I am happy to think that in the President and Secretary of State of the United States you will find statesmen animated by the same honourable dispositions.

Her Majesty's Government hope that the American Government will appreciate the arguments you are instructed to employ, and the spirit in which you will advance them; and Her Majesty's Government will not permit themselves to believe that the negotiation can, under such circumstances, fail of a successful issue.

It may be proper, however, that you should make the Government of the United States understand