

THE FORTY-NINTH PARALLEL

IN the present paper the story of the forty-ninth parallel west of the Rocky Mountains will be told. By Article II of the Convention Oct. 20, 1818, between Great Britain and the United States, the forty-ninth parallel became the boundary line from the Lake of the Woods to the "Stony Mountains," as the Rocky Mountains were formerly called. West of the latter, and to the waters of the Pacific ocean the country was "free and open" to both parties for a period of ten years. By the Convention of Aug. 6, 1827, the period was "indefinitely extended and continued in force." In order to understand clearly what led to the Treaty of June 15, 1846, between Great Britain and the United States, whereby the forty-ninth parallel became the boundary line west of the Rocky Mountains, it is necessary to give a brief historical review of what had been done in discovery, in exploration, and in occupation, so that we may have a fair perspective of the claims of the contending nations. Although Balboa was the first to sight the Pacific in 1513 from Darien, Drake was the first to proceed up the coast in 1579 to latitude 43 degrees. It was nearly a century later before the Spaniard Perez reached as far as 54 degrees. Then follow the memorable explorations of the world's greatest navigator—Captain Cook—who in 1778 explored the Pacific coast northward from 43 degrees, through Bering's Straits, to latitude 70° degrees. Trouble arose between the Spanish and British on the Pacific coast, and by the Nootka Convention of 1790, Spain was practically eliminated as far as territory now under discussion is concerned. The man that left an imperishable monument on the Pacific coast by the accuracy of his survey work was Captain George Vancouver, who had served under Captain Cook. Vancouver's work covered the years 1792-3-4. It is strange that Vancouver missed the discovery of the mouth

