

of the title beyond the reach of everything but British pretensions, founded on the smallest cavils and quibbles of British diplomacy. The committee in 1828 say: "They have come to the conclusion that the United States have an incontestable claim to this coast, from the forty-second parallel of latitude, north, nearly to the mouth of the Strait of De Fuca; and that they have a better title than any other nation to the countries watered by the Strait of De Fuca, and the waters themselves." And they also say, that, "after a careful examination of the British claim, the committee have come to the conclusion that it is wholly unfounded."—19th Congress, 1st sess. *House of Reps.* No. 213.

This has been reiterated and reaffirmed by additional proofs, in the reports of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, 25th Congress, 3d session, No. 101, House of Reps.; and the Committee on Military Affairs, by Mr. Pendleton of Ohio, 27th Congress, 2d sess. No. 830, House of Reps.; and in the able speeches in the Senate, the present and the preceding sessions of Congress.

In all the discussions in Congress, no man who denied the expediency of extending our laws over Oregon, ever doubted our right and the validity of our title. In the Senate, January 12, 1843, Mr. Sevier of Arkansas, said, with the assent of every Senator, "it was gratifying to find that every Senator conceded the point that our right to the territory was incontestable; that question had been well settled."

#### WHAT HAS BEEN DONE TO MAINTAIN THIS RIGHT?

Absolutely nothing by the Government. In 1806, a trifling sum was appropriated for the expenses of the expedition of Lewis and Clark; and from that down to 1826, and till now, not a single rifleman has been supported at the public expense, to protect American citizens in the settlements on their own soil. In the mean time, Great Britain has cautiously continued to develop her plan to check and control all nations, and especially her great commercial and manufacturing rival, the United States, by means of her navy, her commerce, and, above all, in these days, by her wily diplomacy.

Mr. Jefferson, to whom we owe Louisiana, in his message to Congress, January 18, 1803, and in his enlarged views of American rights, recommended the exploration of the Northwest coast, on the express ground of its being territory of the United States. This was followed by the celebrated expedition of Lewis and Clark.

The Government did no more till 1815, when she demanded of Great Britain the restoration, under the 1st article of the treaty of Ghent, of Astoria, in Oregon. Here was the time for England to have set up her title, if she had any. This colony, settled by a private citizen (John Jacob Astor) in 1810, had been transferred, during the war in 1813, to avoid plunder, to the British Northwest Fur Company of Canada, and was soon after taken possession of by the British sloop of war *Rackoon*, sent out expressly for that hostile purpose. The British hoisted their flag, and changed the name of the principal post from Astoria to Fort George.

By the first article of the treaty of Ghent, "restitution was to be made to the United States of all posts and places whatsoever, taken from them by the British." The British Government demurred to this demand till the 6th of October, 1818. But the American Government was resolute in the demand, and England had not then forgotten the lessons taught her by young America, on the ocean, the lakes, and, above all, at New Orleans. Will this proud nation never learn justice but when taught it by stripes?

The article of surrender reads thus: "In conformity to the first article of the treaty of Ghent, we, the undersigned, restore to the Government of the United States the settlement of Fort George, on the river Columbia."

And now the great robber-nation claims this very territory as her own, upon a pretence of fabulous purchase; a false story of discovery; an annulled treaty with Spain; and a miserable tale of a miserable priest, one John Harris, whose compilation of imaginary travels is discredited by their own historians, and by all contemporary and subsequent authors; and this pretension, as all other British pretensions have ever been, is favored, if not sanctioned, by that party which has been essentially British ever since the declaration of independence, and who, if they get the control of negotiation for the next four years, are prepared, under the pretended fear of war, to surrender the Northwestern, as they have the Northeastern boundary, to British cupidity and cunning. Mr. Clay began this surrender, and laid the first foundation of British assumption, in his negotiations of 1827; and will he be less yielding now?

#### THE PROGRESS OF BRITISH PRETENSIONS TO OREGON.

Great Britain, it is seen, virtually recognised the American title by her formal act of surrender October 6, 1818; but in the same month (October 20, 1818,) began her policy of keeping the question of settlement in abeyance, that she might first assume, and then assert, a groundless title. By the 3d article of the treaty of London, of that date, it was agreed that the country on the Northwest coast of America, claimed by either party, should be open to both for ten years, with-