

To this course Mr. Buchanan objected, as being informal, and contrary to the practice of the United States' Government, which coincided, he added, in that respect, with that of the Government of Great Britain, and he requested me, in case your Lordship's instructions did not preclude me from so doing, to communicate to him in writing the present proposal of Her Majesty's Government, together with the considerations upon which it is founded, as explained in your Lordship's despatch. He might otherwise, he said, find it difficult to convey to the President and to his colleagues in the Cabinet as clear an exposition as he could wish of the views of Her Majesty's Government upon the subject, adding that these appeared to him to be so fair and unobjectionable that he could conceive no possible case in which any inconvenience to either Government would result from an unreserved communication of them in writing.

I trust that your Lordship will not disapprove of my having, under these circumstances, so far departed from the course pointed out by your Lordship's instructions as to comply with Mr. Buchanan's request, by addressing to him the note of which I have the honour to enclose a copy, and in which I have embodied the substance of your Lordship's despatch.

With respect to the expediency of laying down that part of the boundary line suggested by your Lordship's despatch, Mr. Buchanan said that he coincided in opinion with Her Majesty's Government, but he added that it was his own "impression," although he had not examined the subject with sufficient attention to enable him yet to say that it was his "opinion," that it would be desirable to go further, and to proceed to mark out on the ground, without unnecessary delay, the boundary line from the point where the 49th parallel of latitude meets the shore of the Gulf of Georgia, eastward to where it strikes the Columbia River (the portions for which an estimate is made in the 3rd section of Colonel Estcourt's Memorandum), and this appeared to him to be advisable from the reports he had lately received of the rapid manner in which colonists from the United States are spreading in that direction.

Speaking of the word "channel," as employed in the Convention of June 1846, Mr. Buchanan said that he himself, and he presumed Mr. Pakenham, in negotiating and signing that Convention, had always conceived "channel" to mean the "main navigable channel," wherever situated, but he admitted that he had never himself examined, nor did he even recollect ever to have seen, Vancouver's chart; and although he did not seem prepared to contest the probability of the channel marked with soundings by Vancouver in that chart being, in fact, "the main navigable channel," he evidently hesitated to adopt that opinion without further geographical evidence, throwing out a suggestion that it would perhaps be better that such instructions should be given to the naval officers to be employed as Joint Commissioners, as would enable them both to determine which of the channels was, in fact, the main navigable channel, and to mark the boundary down the middle of that channel as soon as ascertained.

The subject, Mr. Buchanan assured me, should receive the immediate attention of the United States' Government, with every disposition to avoid delay or difficulty in the accomplishment of an object which he felt to be extremely desirable for both Governments.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JOHN F. CRAMPTON

*Mr. Crampton to Mr. Marcy.*

Sir,

*Washington, February 9, 1856.*

I have been instructed by Her Majesty's Government to call the serious attention of the Government of the United States to the unsatisfactory and hazardous state of things which continues to exist on the boundary which divides the Territory of Washington from the British Possessions occupied by the Hudson's Bay Company; and Her Majesty's Government direct me to express their regret that their repeated remonstrances have not led to any measures which seem to have succeeded in restraining the acts of the authorities of that Territory.

I have already had the honour of addressing your Department (in a note to Mr. Hunter on the 27th July last), respecting the depredations upon the property of the Hudson's Bay Company on the Island of San Juan, by Mr. Ellis Barnes, Sheriff of Watcom County, of the Territory of Washington, in virtue of an alleged claim for taxes due to the authorities of the Territory; and I have now the honour to enclose the copy of a further letter from the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, together with its accompanying documents, in regard to the same matter, from which it appears that no reparation whatever has been made to the Company for the very heavy losses which they incurred on that occasion.

You will at once perceive, Sir, that the occurrence in question has arisen out of the conflicting claims of the authorities of Vancouver's Island and of Washington Territory to the jurisdiction of the Island of San Juan, as appertaining, under the provisions of the Treaty between Great Britain and the United States of 1846, to the dominions of their respective Governments.

San Juan is one of the small islands lying in the Gulf of Georgia, between Vancouver's Island and the mainland; and the question which has arisen between the parties regards the position of the channel through the middle of which, by the provision of the Treaty of 1846, the boundary line is to be run.

In the early part of the year 1848, I had the honour, by the instruction of Her Majesty's Government, to propose to the Government of the United States to name a Joint Commission for the purpose of marking out the north-west boundary; and more particularly that part of it in the neighbourhood of Vancouver's Island, in regard to which, as you will perceive from a reference to my note of the 13th January of that year to the Honourable James Buchanan, the Secretary of State of the United States, Her Majesty's Government already foresaw the possibility of the occurrence of misunder-