

*festina lenté*, nothing more was done for three years, when Lord John Russell took the matter up, and in his memorable despatch of the 24th August, 1859, capped the climax, by formally proposing the Douglas Channel as a *compromise*.

At this time the splendid surveys of the British Admiralty were so far advanced, that all the great hydrographical facts must have been known in London. If not known, the despatch should have been delayed until they were. These facts, interpreted by the Treaty of 1846, would have justified his Lordship in brushing aside all previous misinterpretations and complications, in assuming new ground, and in demanding a centre line, or the Douglas Channel, as a *right*. Of course, the position, then taken, was conclusive. Nothing remained to be done, but to arbitrate between the two channels, the Haro and the Rozario.

But while Lord John Russell was penning his despatch in Downing Street, a great deal more had been, abruptly, done among the distant isles of the Pacific, than the mind of diplomacy could conceive, or its temper stand. The people of Oregon Territory coveted the island of St. Juan, and General Harney, an officer of the United States Army, on the most frivolous pretext, without warning, invaded the island, drums beating, colors flying, with all the pomp and panoply of war. Harney was a kleptomaniac of the school of the first Napoleon. He occupied first and explained afterwards, and his explanations aggravated the outrage. This was in July, 1859. The British Admiral at Esquimalt Harbor, ten miles distant, sent over ships of war, seamen and marines. For a time, the aspect of affairs was threatening in the extreme; but the tact and judgment of the British Governor, Douglas, averted a collision. The intelligence of this hostile irruption reached New York on the 7th September, 1859. Lord