

the above exposition of the dates and facts suffices to establish that claim in favor of Great Britain on a basis too firm to be shaken.

It must, indeed, be admitted that Mr. Gray, finding himself in the bay formed by the discharge of the waters of the Columbia into the Pacific, was the first to ascertain that this bay formed the outlet of a great river—a discovery which had escaped Lieut. Meares, when, in 1788, four years before, he entered the same bay.

But, can it be seriously urged that this single step in the progress of discovery not only wholly supersedes the prior discoveries, both of the bay and the coast, by Lieut. Meares, but equally absorbs the subsequent exploration of the river by Capt. Vancouver, for near a hundred miles above the point to which Mr. Gray's ship had proceeded, the formal taking possession of it by that British navigator, in the name of his sovereign, and also all the other discoveries, exploration, and temporary possession and occupation, of the ports and harbors on the coast, as well of the Pacific as within the straits of De Fuca, up to the 49th parallel of latitude?\*

This pretension, however extraordinary it is, does not embrace the whole of the claim which the United States build upon the limited discovery of Mr. Gray, namely, that the bay of which Cape Disappointment is the northernmost headland is, in fact, the embouchure of a river. That mere ascertainment, it is asserted, confers on the United States a title, in exclusive sovereignty, to the whole extent of country drained by such river, and by all its tributary streams.

In support of this very extraordinary pretension, the United States allege the precedent of grants and charters accorded in former times to companies and individuals, by various European sovereigns, over several parts of the American continent. Among other instances, are adduced the charters granted by Elizabeth, James I., Charles II., and George II., to sundry British subjects and associations,† as also the grant made by Louis XIV. to De Crozat, building, on the express condition that, when he finally left the coast, "the house and all the goods thereunto belonging" should fall into that chief's possession—a

\* No; we claim these latter on the ground of other discoveries, and also on the score of Spain.

† This is a wilful perversion, to say the least of it. The United States, in proving the principle, merely alluded to these latter charters, as instances of Britain's recognition of the rule with her own subjects, or, in other words, when it ran in favor of herself. While the correctness and usage of the principle was otherwise indubitably proved, the above instances were merely brought forward as a conclusive rebuke to Britain's opposition to its application to us.