

of our negotiation with Russia in 1824, when the boundary between that Government and ours was fixed.

The Senator referred to a portion of the diplomatic correspondence from which the injunction of secrecy has not, I believe, been removed. I hope I may have misunderstood the Senator. If I have not, a remark of his is calculated to create great misapprehension, and do infinite injury to our title to any portion of Oregon. It was this: that our negotiators in their correspondence asserted that the northwest coast was open for the occupation of all the world to settle at pleasure; and treated the title which we had derived from Spain by the treaty of 1819, with entire disrespect, and as valueless. I have looked into that correspondence, and, although I may not state the grounds assumed, I must say that, to my apprehension, they placed the matter on totally different grounds.

[Mr. EVANS said, in explanation, that he had not read from the correspondence, but had only used a newspaper paragraph, in which it was stated that our Government, in interpreting the Nootka sound convention, had placed it on the ground he had stated.]

I do not say that he quoted from the correspondence improperly. What I wish to say, is, that it was scarcely possible that our negotiators should have disregarded the Spanish title, while they were, at the very time, fixing the limits between Russia and our Government at the parallel of $54^{\circ} 40'$, up to which line our title was derived solely and entirely from Spain.

Mr. President, I listened with great attention, and, I hope, profit, to the argument, suggestions, and illustrations of the Senator from Maine, (Mr. EVANS;) and I regret—and I say so in no unkind spirit of complaint—that while suggesting difficulties in the way of our title, he should have thought it his duty to say nothing on the adverse pretensions of Great Britain. I should have been much pleased if he had done so, because, from what fell from the Senator, it is manifest that he is quite familiar with the principles of the law of nations. I should have been glad to hear so great a master of the principles of the public law, as the Senator proved himself upon the occasion, test the rights, claims, and pretensions of Great Britain, which, she contends, are “fixed and defined,” “in the text and stipulations of the Nootka Sound convention,” by the principles of the public law. Nay, further, I should have been glad if the Senator from Maine had suggested the difficulties that surround the British Government in making out her claims and pretensions, upon the known and acknowledged principles of public law, to any portion of the northwest coast of America. These pretensions are founded, not upon discovery—for so far as that is concerned, the facts are against her—but based upon occupation and settlement, which can never ripen into title or exclusive sovereignty under the Nootka convention, which fixed and defined these pretensions. This convention she has tried to interpolate into the public law, and arrogantly claims to be the law of nations, for the northwest coast of America. This position presents difficulties far more insurmountable