

neither a very definite nor a very powerful claim. It has been well described by Vattel, in the 208th paragraph of his first book :—

“The law of nations will, therefore, not acknowledge the property and sovereignty of a nation over any uninhabited countries, except those of which it has really taken actual possession, in which it has formed settlements, or of which it makes actual use. In effect, when navigators have met with desert countries in which those of other nations had, in their transient visits, erected some monument to shew their having taken possession of them, they have paid as little regard to that empty ceremony, as to the regulation of the popes, who divided a great part of the world between the crowns of Castile and Portugal.”

With these preliminary observations as a guide, the writer submits the facts in chronological order.

#### DISCOVERIES.

Date.	EXTENT.	Nation.
1543	Ferrelo to $43^{\circ}$ .	S.
1579	Drake from $48^{\circ}$ or $43^{\circ}$ to $38\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ , coasting but not E.	

exploring. The evidence is rather in favour of the forty-eighth degree as the point of commencement. The famous voyage published in 1589, by one of Drake's companions, speaks indeed of the extreme limit as “being in  $43^{\circ}$  of the pole arctic;” but the writer, more particularly as his immediate object was to shew the intensity of the cold, most probably meant to express the polar distance,—the substitution of *within* for “*in*” being all that would be wanted to render the expression perfectly perspicuous. But the context supports, as well as suggests this supposition by contrasting “*in*  $43^{\circ}$  OF THE POLE ARCTIC” with “*within*  $38^{\circ}$  TOWARDS THE LINE. Again, Fletcher's Journal, published in 1652, as the main text of “The World Encompassed,” distinctly gives  $48^{\circ}$ , without referring to any discrepancy between itself and “The Famous Voyage.”