

the reader may have some definite idea of the territory in question, he should pursue the following delineation by the aid of a good map.

It would seem that the Cherokees possessed land extending to the following limits, if not beyond them, viz: From the mouth of Duck river, in Tennessee, on the west, to the waters of French Broad, in North Carolina, on the east; and from the head waters of the Holston, in Virginia, on the north, to some distance down the Oconee, in Georgia, on the south; comprising, beside what is now the Cherokee country, more than half of the State of Tennessee, the southern part of Kentucky, the southwest corner of Virginia, a considerable portion of both of the Carolinas, a small portion of Georgia, and the northern part of Alabama. This tract probably contained more than 35,000,000 acres, of which a large proportion is extremely fertile, and some of it not inferior to any land in North America, or perhaps in the world. The country is also generally healthy, and the climate delightful. Of all this vast and beautiful tract, watered by numerous rivers, which find their way to the ocean, some of them circuitously by the Mississippi, and others more directly to the gulph of Mexico and the Atlantic, the Cherokees now retain less than 8,000,000 acres, of a quality far below the average quality of that which they have sold. Georgia claims 5,000,000 acres of this remnant, as falling within the map of that State. Alabama claims nearly 1,000,000 of the residue. The portions which, in the general division, will fall to Tennessee and North Carolina, seem hardly worth enquiring about; for, if the other portions are given up, or taken by force, there will be no motive for retaining these.

To every application made for their lands within the last ten years, the Cherokees have said, "We are not disposed to sell any more. We have betaken ourselves to an agricultural life. We are making progress in civilization. We are attached to our schools and our Christian teachers; to our farms; to our native rivers and mountains. We have not too much land for our own comfort, and for affording us a fair chance in the experiment we are making." This language has been repeated in many forms, and with every indication of sincerity and earnestness.

The assertion of the Cherokees, that their present country is not too large for a fair experiment in the work of civilization, is undoubtedly correct. The wisest men, who have thought and written on this subject, agree in the opinion, that no tribe of Indians can rise to real civilization, and to the full enjoyment of Christian society, unless they can have a community of their own; and can be so much separated from the whites, as to form and cherish something of a national character. If the limits of the Cherokee country were much smaller than they are, this would be impracticable.

Thus stands the case; and it is now my intention to inquire how the government of the United States has regarded the Indian title, and how it has been regarded by the several States in the vicinity of the Cherokees.

Before this inquiry is commenced, however, it is proper to say, that the title of one party cannot be safely decided by the mere *claims* of another party. If those claims are founded in justice, they ought to prevail; if not, they should be set aside. Now, whatever doctrines the government of the United States may have held and promulgated on this