

degree of west longitude shall prove to be at the distance of more than ten marine leagues from the ocean, the limit between the British possessions and the line of coast which is to belong to Russia, as above mentioned, shall be formed by a line parallel to the windings of the coast, and which shall never exceed the distance of ten marine leagues therefrom."

This description of the boundary line is about as clear and free from ambiguity as it could possibly be made in the English language, and Senator Charles Sumner was entirely justified in saying, in his great speech advocating the purchase of Alaska, that: "I am glad to begin with what is clear and beyond question. I refer to the boundary fixed by the treaty." In the year 1821 the Russian emperor, by his ukase, excluded foreigners from pursuing commerce, whaling, fishing and all other industries within 100 Italian miles from the coast and on the adjacent lands, down to the 51st parallel. By the treaty made with the United States in 1824, and with Great Britain in 1825, Russia relinquished her claim of jurisdiction south of the line of fifty-four forty, but secured in unmistakable terms confirmation of her claim to the entire coast north of that line, and the key to the correct reading of the description of the boundary in the convention of 1825 is to be found in the words "the limit between the British possessions and the line of the coast which is to belong to Russia, as above mentioned, shall be formed by a line parallel to the winding of the coast." To make it perfectly clear that the coast line in its entirety and in its integrity should belong to Russia, the range of mountains parallel to the coast was fixed upon as a natural boundary, not the foothills and spurs nearest the coast, but the convention specified that the line of demarkation should follow the summit of the mountains. The object being to secure to Russia only enough land adjacent to the coast to constitute a fence, which should preclude any chance of the British ever gaining any pretext of a right to the possession of any seaport, it was consistently with this object provided that if the summit of the mountains should be found to be more than ten marine leagues distant from the ocean, then and in that case, instead of the summit of the mountains constituting the boundary, the limit of the coast line belonging to Russia shall be formed by a line parallel to and not a greater distance than ten marine leagues from the winding of the coast. It is important to notice that the line from which the distance is to be measured, and which is to be parallel to the boundary line, is not the shore of the