

along its shores, for it exposes the unbroken face of the solid continent to the uninterrupted surf of the open ocean, having only one island, and that hardly worthy of the name, and only two inlets, and those inaccessible at all times to large ships, and accessible to small vessels merely in such weather as renders refuge unnecessary. The northern half of the disputed territory, and the lower portion of Russian America, after having long been taken by the navigators of various nations as a part of the continent, were gradually discovered to be the insular breastwork of a matchless labyrinth of sheltered deeps; and the upper part of Russian America, whose far-jutting headlands were naturally enough viewed by those, who first came upon them from the West, as a continuation of the Aleutian Isles, was subsequently moulded into a continent by the zeal and perseverance of Cook. In the last two cases, an exclusive claim, on the ground of the original discovery to that, which the original discoverer had not seen, and had not even imagined, would be fully as absurd as the exclusive claim which Spain set up to the whole of the western coast, on the grounds,—truly magnificent in themselves,—of having first discovered America, the Pacific, the Strait of Magellan, and the passage from the Philippines to Mexico,—of having first discovered, in short, nearly all the contiguous land, and almost every avenue of approach by water.

Under all these circumstances, discovery involves