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Why it should be practicable to have a boundary-line "following the crest of the Rocky Mountains northwards till its intersection with the Bitter Root Mountains, thence northward along the crest of said Bitter Root Mountains to its intersection with the 39th degree of longitude west from Washington," and "the summit of the mountains" (occurring in the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1885) be wholly impracticable, as stated by Professor Dall, is not easily discerned.

It cannot be urged that the mountain boundary of Montana is synonymous with the line of the continental watershed, and hence practically indisputable. Examina-tion will show that only the south-eastern part of the boundary is coincident with the line of the continental watershed. The query of Professor Dall, "Shall we take the highest summit of the general mass of the coast ranges ?" might with equal propriety be put in the case of Montana, by asking, "Shall we take the highest summit of the general mass of the Rocky Mountains?"

It is not known to the writer that the last question has ever arisen, and if it does, it undoubtedly will find a speedy solution between amicably disposed States.

There are probably very few Treaty boundaries extant which, if put under the dissecting knife of one disposed to find fault, would not be found to have flaws.

It is necessary that one be familiar with the causes and reasons that led to the making of a Treaty in order to imbibe the spirit and intent thereof, whereby possibly ambiguous or obscure passages may the more readily be understood.

Many cases might be cited from Treaties, Conventions, and Agreements wherein physical features or monuments are referred to geographical co-ordinates; as has been done with the "southernmost point of the island called Prince of Wales Island."

In the Treaty of Washington of the 9th August, 1842, is found, United States' Geological Survey, Bulletin No. 13, p. 17: ". . . . thence along said line to the said most north-western point" (of the Lake of the Woods), "being in latitude 49° 23' 55" north, and in longitude 95° 14' 38" west from the Observatory at Greenwich. . . . "

The principle involved in this description is identical with that of the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1825 concerning the point of commencement of the boundaryline. In both there is a physical feature, and in both the geographical position of those physical features is given.

The physical feature is always absolute, the geographical position of the physical feature is always approximate, no matter how refined the observation.

The better the observation the nearer the approximation. Abstractly considered, as an axiom it may be laid down that the position of physical features or monuments and the geographical or geodetic expression for such position, are incompatibles.

What is really meant by these geographical or geodetic expressions is, "to the hest of our knowledge and belief, said is situated in latitude , longitude

" This is simply done to insure the identification of the physical feature. Undoubtedly a geographical position can be made absolute, but only by disassociating it from any physical feature.

As an example may be given the north-east corner of Montana, United States' Geological Survey, Bulletin No. 13, p. 122: "Commencing at a point formed by the intersection of the 27th degree of longitude west from Washington with the 45th degree of north latitude, thence . . ." This point can only be determined by observation, and different sets of observa-

tions will very probably not give the same point upon the earth. The dependent physical point will shift with every set of observations for determining the same, whereas with the given physical feature its geodetic position shifts with every observation. Nevertheless, the refinements in astronomic observations are at the present time of such precision that for practical purposes the differences, resulting from various determinations, are so small that they may generally be disregarded.

When the description of a boundary-line has been referred to mathematical points, dependent upon geographical co-ordinates, to give effect to such boundary-line, material points must be substituted for the mathematical ones.

This is generally accomplished by a Joint Commission determining by observations the position of the boundary-line on the ground, and the result of its labour ratified by the interested and proper authoritics. This latter act is in reality an inversion of the strict wording of the boundary-line, for now, by the act of ratification, certain monuments planted under authority "shall" mark and designate certain points of said boundary line, whether they are areatly when they aloudd be or not boundary-line, whether they are exactly where they should be or not.

It is seen, therefore, that in the end we have always to deal with a material point or physical feature, irrespective of its absolute geographical position.