

question; the words "already occupied" clearly referring to the date of the convention, to wit October, 1790; and not, by any possible construction, as Vancouver would have them refer, to the date of the alleged capture.

As an offset to the evidence of Captains Gray and Ingraham, and, so far as it appears, as the sole warrant beyond the words of the convention, for his demand of the whole settlement of Nootka, Vancouver brings forward the deposition of a certain Robert Duffin, supercargo under Meares, and who was with him at Nootka in 1788. Vancouver gives, in his voyage, but the substance of this man's evidence; of which the material part, according to his version, is as follows:

"Mr. Meares attended by himself (Duffin) and Mr. Robert Hunter, on the 17th or 18th of May, 1788, went on shore and bought of the two chiefs, Maquilla and Callicum, the whole of the land that forms the Friendly Cove, Nootka Sound, in his Majesty's name, for eight or ten sheets of copper, and some trifling articles: that the natives were perfectly satisfied, and, with the chiefs, did homage to Mr. Meares as their sovereign, according to the custom of the country, &c."—*Voyage*, Vol. 2., p. 370—371.

This statement of Duffin's is an utter falsehood; whether suborned for the occasion or not, we may not now determine. Great Britain's own principal witness shall disprove it; the reputed sovereign, the very man, who is said to have made this important purchase, and who published, the next year, the narrative of his voyage and his claims and his wrongs; even Mr. Meares himself. Here he is, in very respectable quarto form. And what is his testimony? What says his daily journal of the proceedings at Nootka? Under date the 16th May 1788 (Duffin has it the 17th or 18th) Meares says, that he had a visit from the two Nootka chiefs. He adds:

"A present consisting of iron and other gratifying articles, was made to us by Maquilla and Callicum; who, on receiving it, took away other garments, threw them, in the most graceful manner, at our feet and remained, in the unadorned garb of nature, on the deck."—*Voyage*, p. 113—114.

A present observe; and generously returned, too. But is there no mention made, on that day, or on the 17th or 18th, of the purchase of Nootka; nothing said of the flattering homage done to Mr. Meares as sovereign? Not a syllable, either on the 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, nor any other day. The sole foundation for this romance of the supercargo, if foundation it have at all, is to be found in Meares's journal, under date of the 25th of that month, where he says:

"Maquilla had not only most readily consented to grant us a spot of ground in his territory, whereon a house might be built for the accommodation of the people we intended to leave there, but had promised us also his assistance in forwarding our works, and his protection of the party, who were destined to remain at Nootka during our absence. In return for this kindness, the chief was presented with a pair of pistols, which he had regarded with an eye of solicitude ever since our arrival."—*Voyage*, p. 114.

Was ever, in a grave dispute between two great nations, pretension so idle supported by falsehood so shameless! The whole proceeding is a type, but too strictly faithful, of England's pretensions on the Northwest coast. Thus it stands:

Meares, a British trader in search of furs, puts into Nootka Sound. There, according to his own story told his own way, the native chief "consents to grant," not to sell, a "spot of ground," whereon he may build; and "in return for this kindness"—no pretence here, of payment, even for that spot of ground—the trader makes to the chief a small present.

In the commencement of this man's memorial laid before Parliament two years afterwards, it is still only "a spot of ground, whereon he built a house for his occasional residence;" but it is purchased from Maquilla. Even before the memorial concludes, however, this modest spot of ground has swelled into "the lands belonging to your memorialist."

The men in buckram increase in number as the drama proceeds. By the month of October 1790, and in the words of the Convention, it had become "buildings and tracts of land," of which Meares had been dispossessed; and when two years more had passed over the transaction, nothing short of the whole settlement of Nootka, with the recognition of Meares as sovereign of the territory, would satisfy the voraciously increasing appetite of the British claim.

Spain, as may well be supposed, was not prepared to keep pace with these yearly-increasing demands. Quadra and the British navigator parted in personal kindness, but after a fruitless negotiation; Nootka remaining in the possession of Spain. Vancouver expressly says:

"I requested in conversation the next day (September 16, 1792) to be informed, if he (Quadra) was positively resolved to adhere, in the restitution of this country, to the principles contained in his last letter; and on receiving from him a reply in the affirmative, I acquainted him, that I should consider Nootka as a Spanish port; and requested his permission to carry on the necessary employments on shore, which he very politely gave."—*Voyage*, Vol. 2, p. 367, 368.

Two years after this negotiation, namely in September 1794, Vancouver returned to Nootka, found the Spanish flag still flying there; and, Quadra having died meanwhile, found Señor Alava appointed commandant of Nootka. From this gentleman he learnt that he (Alava) had been appointed "for the particular purpose of finishing the pending negotiation." But no instructions from England had reached Vancouver; and he left Nootka without effecting anything.

Two months later, at Monterey, Vancouver says that Alava received instructions, of which he confided a part to the British navigator; and these instructions, so Vancouver tells us, would enable an amicable adjustment "nearly on the terms offered to Señor Quadra in September 1792." But still, no instructions to Vancouver; who accordingly returned to England, leaving the whole matter open as before.

So far, then, it is confessed, that for more than four years after the signature of a convention wrung from Spain by menace and lavish warlike preparation, she remained in peaceful and undisturbed possession of the entire settlement of Nootka. Nor is there any evidence, unless we consider as such a vague report alluded to by an undistinguished navigator, that one foot of land in that Sound ever was surrendered by Spain to England. A Captain Broughton, in his "Voyage to the Pacific," in 1795—6, tells us, that, in March 1796, he made the harbor of Nootka; and he adds:

"I sent an officer into the cove for intelligence; who returned at noon, and reported there were no vessels in it; and that the spot on which the Spanish settlement formerly stood was now occupied by an Indian village."—*Voyage*, p. 60.

He then goes on to say:

"Maquilla, the chief of Nootka, paid us a visit here; and he and Clupanutch, another chief, brought me several letters dated March 1795, which informed me, that Captain Vancouver sailed from Monterey the 1st December 1794