

one thing, legislation another—at least this was so seventy years ago. Arbitration indeed was refused, but two diplomats got together and discussed the situation with candor; and an offer of the Imperial Government to “split the difference” at the 49th parallel was accepted in 1846; the British Government adopting a line which had been offered to them at least twice before. Now here was a strip 400 miles wide, stretching half across the continent, worth untold millions, but the two countries could not get up a war over even that splendid territory.

The trouble was not over; the international line was fixed to run south of Vancouver Island along the middle of the channel which separates the Continent from Vancouver Island. Geography has a way of laughing at diplomats: there turned out to be three channels, each of which might fairly be claimed as the main channel.

It needs no subtlety of intellect to guess how the two peoples made their claims. Rosario, nearest the mainland, was Britain's choice; De Haro, nearest to Vancouver Island, that of the United States, and Douglas, between, was disowned by both. An American commander, General Harney, took possession with an armed force of the Island of San Juan, of which the Hudson Bay Company were in occupation, as British territory. British men-of-war were sent out and—there was no fight. A joint occupation was agreed to, and finally the question in dispute was left to the Emperor of Germany, who decided in favor of the American contention. And no one complains or feels aggrieved—unless it is the United States.

Almost exactly a hundred years after the beginning of that war, questions of considerable difficulty which had troubled the two nations for many years, came to be decided. This time a Board of Judges was chosen. Two were in fact Judges, an American and a Canadian, and the three others were lawyers of high standing. (I do not use the expression “Jurists of repute;” that has an ominous sound in the ear of a Canadian since 1903.) Their award was hailed with acclaim by all parties. Everyone felt that any settlement of our stand-