

Joint Commission on the Claims of the Hudson's Bay and Puget's Sound Agricultural Companies.

TO THE HONORABLE THE COMMISSIONERS:

A few observations will suffice in reply to those offered by the Counsel for the United States, in relation to the negotiations for the transfer of the territory of the Hudson's Bay Company, which terminated in the acceptance by the Company of the terms dictated by the Government of Great Britain, in the letter from the Colonial Office, dated 9th March, 1869.

These negotiations, or their result, cannot be received as affording any kind of evidence or indication of value of the Company's claims against the United States. They involve a variety of considerations and influences, which are entirely independent of any estimate of the value of the soil.

The statements which follow, will be found to be amply borne out, not only by the letter just noticed, but also by reference to a pamphlet recently published in London, entitled "Correspondence between Her Majesty's Government and the Hudson's Bay Company," in which the course and history of all the negotiations from the beginning may be seen. I call attention to the letters from successive Secretaries for the Colonies, and from the Governors of the Hudson's Bay Company, or to particular passages of them contained in it. The references following in the course of these observations are to the pages of this pamphlet.

The considerations and influences alluded to are political and social.

1. It is manifest that so great a territory could not have continued to be held by a private corporation merely for the purpose