

General Government, to take the sense of this State in regard to the expediency of opening a direct negotiation for the establishment of a *conventional line*; and if Maine should deem an attempt to adjust the matter in controversy in that form advisable, then to ask the assent of Maine to the same.

The grave and important question, therefore, presented for your consideration, as you will more fully perceive by the documents referred to, is, whether you will clothe the Executive of the United States with the unlimited power of fixing a new and conventional line in lieu of the treaty boundary.

It is certainly gratifying to perceive that the right of Maine to be heard and consulted before the treaty line is abandoned, is fully recognised by the General Government; and I have no doubt the Legislature of Maine will approach the consideration of the proposition in the same spirit it is offered, and with an anxious desire to terminate this long pending and embarrassing question, if it can be done without too great a sacrifice of honor and right. Although the documents are somewhat voluminous, the proposition is single and simple in its character, and easily understood.

I have given to the subject all the reflection and examination I have been able to bestow since the reception of the documents, and with a most anxious desire to acquiesce in any feasible scheme of adjustment, or any reasonable proposition for a settlement, I feel constrained to say that I can see little to hope, and much to fear, from the proposed departure from the treaty line.

I think that the most cursory examination of the correspondence and movements on the part of Great Britain, must satisfy any one that the leading object which her diplomatists have had in view, since the result of the arbitration, has been to destroy or lay aside the treaty line; to lead us away from the clear, unambiguous, definite terms of that treaty, and involve us in interminable discussions, propositions, and replies in relation to conventional lines, no one of which would be accepted unless it gave to them a large part of our territory. We find that in May, 1833, very soon after the President, in pursuance of the advice of the Senate, had opened a new negotiation to ascertain the line *according to the treaty of 1783*, to which treaty line the negotiation, of course, was confined, the British minister suggested "that this perplexed, and hitherto interminable, question, could only be set at rest by an abandonment of the *defective* description of boundary contained in the treaty, and by the two Governments mutually agreeing upon a *conventional* line more convenient to both parties." The same intention is apparent in the refusal to acquiesce in the proposition to refer the settlement of the treaty line to a commission, to be constituted of an equal number chosen by each party, with an umpire to be designated by a friendly power from the most skilful men in Europe; or, secondly, that the commission should be entirely composed of such scientific men of Europe, to be selected by some friendly power, to be attended in the survey and view of the country by agents appointed by the parties. It was in answer to this proposition that the suggestion of the impracticability of the treaty line was made, and the intention became apparent to lead us away from that inconvenient obstacle to their wishes and plans, the treaty language. The proposition was so equitable and fair, so just to all parties, and so full of promise of adjustment upon proceedings satisfactory to us, that it could not be peremptorily rejected. But although it was entertained, the answer

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