

of our sailors. Such flowers of rhetoric were elegant embellishments, equally convenient to give force to argument or to conceal the want of it. But was it true that we had opened any of those sources, or made a single acquisition? An honorable gentleman, who spoke immediately before him, had put the question upon its true grounds. Having caught the contagion of the speakers who preceded him on the same side, he had talked of gaining and acquiring; but, in the progress of his argument, he had very properly stated that we had acquired nothing, but only obtained security for what we possessed before.

"What, then, was the extent of our rights before the convention, and to what extent were they now secured to us? We possessed and exercised the free navigation of the Pacific Ocean, without restraint or limitation; we possessed and exercised the right of carrying on fisheries in the South Seas, equally unlimited. This estate we had, and were daily improving; it was not to be disgraced by the name of an acquisition. The admission of part of these rights by Spain was all we had obtained. It remained to inquire what it cost. Our right before was to settle in any part of South or Northwest America not fortified against us by previous occupancy; and we are now restricted to settle in certain places only, and under certain restrictions. This was an important concession on our part; our rights of fishing extended to the whole ocean; and now it too was limited, and to be carried on within certain distances of the Spanish settlements. Our right of making settlements was not, as now, a right to build huts, but to plant colonies if we thought proper. Surely these were not acquisitions."

Speaking of the indefinite limits of Spanish America, he says:

"On this point we have gained nothing. We have renounced the right of permanent settlement on the whole extent of South America, and where the admitted right of settlement on the Northwest coast commenced was completely undefined; it was said at Nootka, but we did not know that Nootka would be restored.

"By the third article, we are authorized to navigate the Pacific Ocean and South Seas unmolested, for the purpose of carrying on our fisheries, and to land on the unsettled coasts, for the purpose of trading with the natives; but after this pompous recognition of right to navigation, fishery, and commerce, comes another article, (the sixth,) which takes away all right of landing and erecting even temporary huts for any purpose but that of carrying on the fishery, and amounts to a complete dereliction of all right to settle in any way for the purpose of commerce with the natives.

"In renouncing all right to make settlements in South America, we had given to Spain what she considered as inestimable, and had in return been contented with dross."

Vancouver informs us that in April, 1792, he discovered a sail, which soon hoisted American colors and fired a gun to leeward. She proved to be the ship *Columbia*, commanded by Mr. Robert Gray, of Boston, whence she had been absent nineteen months; and this brings us to the

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Vancouver sent a boat on board of the *Columbia*, to the officer of which Captain Gray communicated information of the extent of his visit into a strait which had attracted much attention. He said "he had penetrated only fifty miles into the strait in question, in an E. S. E. direction," etc. The inlet he supposed to be the same De Fuca had discovered, which opinion seemed to be universally received by all modern writers. He likewise informed them of his having been "off the mouth of a river in latitude $47^{\circ} 10'$, where the outset or reflux was so strong as to prevent his entering for nine days." Vancouver adds: "This was probably the opening passed by us on the forenoon of the 27th, and was apparently inaccessible, not from the current, but from the breakers that extended across it."

So Vancouver had no idea of there being a river there until he was informed by Captain Gray. He afterward admits Gray discovered the river; for, after leaving Nootka, in October, 1782, he says the serenity of the weather encouraged him to hope that he might be enabled, on his way South, to "re-examine the coast of New Albion, and particularly a river and harbor discovered by Mr. Gray, in the *Columbia*, between the 46th and 47th degrees of north latitude." Here is a distinct recognition, by an officer of the British navy, of the first discovery of that river by a citi-