

thought inconsistent with our professions of perfect disinterestedness to take possession of the whole of Russian America. An expedition was fitted out for some such purpose, but it led to nothing; very possibly its failure is attributable, as has been alleged, to an indisposition on the part of the Company either to do, or to permit, anything offensive or injurious to its Russian neighbours.

The same selfish and anti-national policy continues in operation, and it will, if not checked in time, undoubtedly produce similar results. The Hudson's Bay Company still regards millions of square miles of territory, abounding in all the means of wealth, agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial, and possessing the finest system of water communication in the world as nothing better than one vast hunting field, subordinating all other considerations to that of "some trade in furs." With this sole view it has endeavoured, so far as in it lay, to retain nearly half the Continent of America in a state of wild and barren waste, keeping out men in order that beasts might breed and multiply. As regards subjects of the British Crown, this execrable policy has, to a great extent, succeeded :—not so as regards American citizens. Considering their spirit of enterprise and indomitable energy, it was not to be expected that they would remain on their own side of the boundary when there were rich waste lands, turned to no useful purpose, and never likely to be, by the proper owners, tempting them beyond it. A squatting population first,—then annexation, were the natural consequences. Thus was Oregon lost,—and thus will other valuable portions of British territory be lost also, within the next ten or dozen years, if the Hudson's Bay monopoly be allowed to exist so long. According to the latest news the inhabitants of the new State of Minnesota are looking with longing eyes into the British desert close at hand. Their newspapers speak of "the rich booty that lies to be seized by the boldest and most enterprising;" they state that thousands are flocking to the neighbourhood from all parts of the Union; that invading companies have already been organised; and that sites for American towns have already been marked out on what is, as yet, British territory. All this is very aggressive, no doubt;