

it expression. Such a compliment, proceeding from such a body of my countrymen, would be an ample reward for greater merit than I can possibly pretend to; and I will not attempt to disguise the sincere gratification it has afforded me. Highly as I value it, however, it gives me pleasure to acknowledge that, being myself, upon the occasion to which you particularly refer, only an instrument in assisting the purposes of others, the greater share of your approbation is due to those with whom I co-operated.

Omitting for a moment a more particular reference to the conduct and dispositions of our own Government, I may without impropriety, assure you that your reference to the distinguished British statesman by whom the negotiation on the part of that government was directed, is fully merited, and that upon any occasion of congratulation upon the result, too much praise cannot be bestowed upon his manly sense, and unwavering determination to promote an amicable settlement of the question.

I am free at the same time to assure you, gentlemen, that no one can be more sensible of the importance of peace to all interests of the country, and especially to those which you so worthily represent, than I am. Of course, where the honor of the country is involved, no one would stop to count the cost, or estimate the evils of war: but it is a gratifying evidence of the age in which we live that the rulers of States are not afraid to acknowledge that the national honor is more apt to be committed by hasty and impracticable demands, than by wise and timely concessions.

Governments, like ours, especially, can rarely disturb the peace of the world, without incurring a weighty responsibility to the cause of civilization and human happiness, and, if not hazarding their own stability, without seriously impairing their moral influence.

I certainly could not have been induced to return to political life as the representative of my country abroad, unless I had been persuaded that, in the crisis to which you have referred, the views of my own government had been entirely consistent with such a settlement of the Oregon question as ought to have secured an honorable peace, and unless I had entertained the hope that I might be enabled in some degree to co-operate to that end.

For myself, after our several conventions of 1818, and 1828, for the joint occupation of the territory, the latter of which received my support as a Senator of the United States, I had always regarded the Oregon question as less dependant upon the force of title than upon the principles of an equitable partition.

It would have been unreasonable to expect, after such acknowledgement of the right of joint occupancy, that either party would be permitted wholly to dispossess the other, at least without some regard to interests which had grown up during their mutual possession. It appears to me also, that all the previous acts of our government had not only been consistent with, but affirmatory of this view; and I could see nothing in the national honor that would justify, much less demand a departure from it. Possessing before, in as great a degree as after, the treaty with Spain in 1819, all the title, which, on the ground of discovery, we could assert to the country drained by the waters of the Columbia, and which, if good for anything, was valid beyond the 52d parallel degree of latitude, our government at no time proposed a more northern boundary than the parallel of 51, and never demanded more than that of 49.

Having some knowledge from my official position at that time, of the policy and objects of the Convention of 1828, I am quite persuaded that its main design was to lead in a future partition of the territory to the recognition of our claim to the country, not north, but south of the 49th parallel, and between that and the Columbia river. A division of the country upon that principle, with a reasonable regard to rights grown up under the joint possession, always appeared to me to afford a just and practical basis for an amicable adjustment of the subject. Such, also, I was satisfied were the views of our government at the time I engaged in my recent mission; and in earnestly and steadily labouring to effect a settlement upon that basis, I was but representing the policy of my own government, and faithfully promoting the intentions and wishes of the President.

It must be very rare, if in complicated differences between great nations, peaceful relations can be preserved without some modification of extreme pretensions; and upon the present occasion from the length of time for which the question had been depending, together with the often repeated propositions on both sides, the two governments could not have reasonably expected to come to an amicable arrangement without some mutual concession of their former demands.

If, on our side, by dividing on the 49th parallel and the Straits of Fuca, we yielded the southern cape of Vancouver's Island, Great Britain surrendered her previous claim to the jurisdiction and unoccupied territory between the 49th parallel and the Columbia river. At the same time we have effected a material modification of our former offer of the perpetual navigation of the Columbia River to British trade and British subjects generally. Although, from deference to the views and opinions of others, which it was no less my wish than my duty to respect, I earnestly endeavoured to effect a settlement upon the basis of allowing the navigation of the river to the general trade for a period of twenty years; nevertheless, when that from causes to which I need not now particularly refer, proved to be impracticable, in suggesting and urging that it should be restricted to the Hudson Bay Company, I thought it effecting an object even less objectionable.

It seems to me that, in the present state of commerce, it is not only the interest but the practice of nations, independent of some

inveterate notions of colonial policy, already yielding to more enlightened views, to allow the greatest freedom of rivers and ports to the trade of the world; and it may be observed that, until the United States and Great Britain shall determine to abandon the reciprocity secured by the existing commercial convention, the recent Oregon treaty secures fewer privileges of navigation than may be claimed and enjoyed under the commercial convention. I felt confident, moreover, that long before the two governments would desire to alter their existing commercial freedom, if, indeed they should ever desire to do so, during the continuance of peace, the Hudson's Bay Company would cease to have any occasion or motive to navigate such a river as the Columbia is known to be. It would not be easy to imagine any use they could make of it, during a state of peace, inconsistent with the commerce and interests of our own citizens.

Universal satisfaction at the adjustment of a difficulty so complicated and inveterate was scarcely to be expected, and yet it is a source of satisfaction to know that its general acceptableness to the country at large affords a sure guarantee of the continuance of our future peace. The tone and temper with which the negotiation was conducted, in their several departments, by both governments, have been creditable to their wisdom and moderation, and have already served to elevate our own in the opinion of other nations.

I sincerely believe that these effects cannot be too highly appreciated; and if any portion of our fellow citizens, in any section of the country, should feel that they have not obtained all the territory or advantages that they had expected to acquire, it may be hoped they will, nevertheless, be satisfied that the national honor, so far from suffering, has really been elevated by the result, and that, in preserving the blessings of peace, and keeping our country steadily in a career of glorious prosperity, they will be amply compensated for any disappointment they may have experienced, and gain far more than an equivalent for any doubtful advantage to be sought only through the instrumentality of war.

Having now effaced, upon honorable terms, the last cause that threatened the peace of the two people of kindred origin, and associated by commercial relations more extensive and important than exist between any other two nations of the globe, may we not now hope to begin a new career of international intercourse, and by the uninterrupted pursuit of commerce and the arts, extend and cement our relations? It ought to be considered as fortunate that these results have happened at a moment when, by the wisdom and courage of British statesmen, a new and important step has been taken in the enlargement of commerce, by which the trade of different nations must be vastly extended, and the motives of harmonious relations indefinitely multiplied. As between the United States and Great Britain especially, the causes which ought naturally to associate the two people upon an honorable basis, and contribute to their mutual prosperity, may now have fair play, and our competition in future be confined to a generous rivalry in all that can advance the happiness of the people of both countries, and of mankind at large.

I would do injustice to the occasion, if I should omit to state it as my opinion that in the country and among the people I have just left, these expectations begin to be generally entertained; and that the settlement of the Oregon question will soon come to be universally regarded as the knell of those inveterate jealousies and feuds which, it may be apprehended, have so long exerted a mischievous influence over the people, if not upon the councils of both countries.

I may say with certainty, also, that whatever may be thought of the result by some respectable portions of our countrymen, the terms we have ultimately obtained, no less than the vindication of our rights, and the ultimate approval of an honorable concession, have added another refutation to the charge of undue ambition, and to the imputation upon our national faith and stability, not unfrequently made in some quarters of Europe.

If these advantages be properly appreciated, the time is not remote when all will be ready to acknowledge and rejoice in the result.

The occasion may not be inapt to bear my testimony to the sense universally entertained abroad of the enterprise and punctuality of the commercial classes of the United States, and to the influence it has exerted in sustaining American credit, in defiance of causes which I too deeply deplore to attempt at this time more particularly to allude to. I will add too, that even these causes are beginning to feel the influence of juster views and a brighter hope; and that little more than a perseverance by some of our local governments in their exertions to maintain the public credit, is needed to elevate our country to a proud and enviable rank among the nations of the earth.

TOWN LOTS FOR SALE.

THE Property of the Honorable John S. Saunders, bounded by George, Charlotte, and Regent Streets, is offered for sale, in Building Lots.

Also several Lots in the neighbourhood of the Scottish Church, between George and Charlotte Streets.

Fredericton, 3d February, 1846.

I HEREBY caution any Person or Persons from purchasing a Note of Hand drawn by the Subscriber, in favor of one John McIntosh, for £75, dated the 17th day of January last past, and payable the 20th day of June next, as no value has been received for the said Note.

St. Francis, 30th March, 1846.—tf.

ROBERT KERR.