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ART. XVIII.—*Message from the President of the United States, transmitting the information required by a resolution of the House of Representatives of the 16th of February last, in relation to Claims set up by Foreign Governments, to Territory of the United States upon the Pacific Ocean, north of the forty-second degree of latitude, &c.* April 17, 1822.

THE measures lately adopted by the Russian government, in relation to the northwestern coast of the American continent, are of so extraordinary a character, that we cannot re-

frain from examining the subject, and offering such comments as it naturally demands. We are sensible that a discussion relative to a country so remote, having within its limits but few objects to excite the curiosity, and only connected with the civilized world by an extremely limited commerce, might not ordinarily, awaken much general interest. But it is also well known that particular causes have heretofore drawn to it the attention, both of statesmen and philosophers, and we are not sure that the attempts to discover a northwest passage, or the dispute respecting *Nootka sound*, involved more serious consequences than the efforts now making by Russia, in that quarter of the globe, to monopolize commerce and usurp territory.

A trade to the northwestern coast of America, and the free navigation of the waters that wash its shores, have been enjoyed as a common right by subjects of the United States, and of several European powers, without interruption, for nearly forty years. We are by no means prepared to believe, or admit, that all this has been on sufferance merely; and that the *rights* of commerce and navigation in that region, have been vested in Russia alone. If such be the fact, however—if Russia has always possessed the right to interdict this trade, we cannot but wonder at her forbearance in permitting it to be carried on for so long a time, manifestly to the injury of her own subjects. Had a monopoly of the fur trade, which Russia now aims at, been secured to the 'Russian American Company' thirty years ago, that company, with any prudent management, might have attained at the present time the second rank, for wealth and power, in the commercial world, and been worthy not only of imperial protection, but of imperial attributes.

A short account of this trade, and sketch of its present state, may assist our readers in forming some estimate of the importance of this subject to the United States, merely in a commercial view, and independent of any question of territorial rights which it may be thought to involve. The third voyage of Cook having made us acquainted with countries of which little was before known; several enterprising individuals, allured by the prospect of a profitable traffic with the natives, engaged in voyages to the northwest coast as early as 1784. The citizens of the United States, then just recovering from the entire prostration of their commerce by the revo-

lutionary war, and possessing more enterprise than capital, were not slow in perceiving the benefits likely to result from the participation in a branch of trade, where industry and perseverance could be substituted for capital. In 1787, two vessels were fitted out in the port of Boston, the Columbia of three hundred tons, and the Washington of one hundred tons burthen ; the former commanded by Mr John Kendrick, the latter by Mr Robert Grey, since known as the first navigator who entered the river Columbia. Other vessels followed shortly after, and those entrusted with the management of these voyages soon acquired the necessary local knowledge to insure a successful competition with the traders of other nations (mostly English) who had preceded them. The habits and ordinary pursuits of the New Englanders qualified them in a peculiar manner for carrying on this trade, and the embarrassed state of Europe, combined with other circumstances, gave them, in the course of a few years, almost a monopoly of the most lucrative part of it. In 1801, which was perhaps the most flourishing period of the trade, there were sixteen ships on the northwest coast, fifteen of which were Americans, and one English. Upwards of eighteen thousand sea otter skins, besides other furs, were collected for the China market in that year, by the American vessels alone. Since that time the trade has declined, the sea otter having become scarce, in consequence of the impolitic system pursued by the Russians, as well as by the natives, who destroy indiscriminately the old and the young of this animal, which will probably in a few years be as rarely met with on the coast of America, as it is now on that of Kamtchatka and among the Aleutian islands, where they abounded when first discovered by the Russians. There are at the present time absent from the United States fourteen vessels engaged in this trade, combined with that to the Sandwich islands, which for several years past has been carried on to a considerable extent in sandal wood. These vessels are from two to four hundred tons burthen, and carry from twenty-five to thirty men each, and they are usually about three years in completing a voyage. After exchanging with the natives of the coast for furs, such part of their cargoes as is adapted to the wants or suited to the fancy of these people, the ships return to the Sandwich islands, where a cargo of sandal wood is prepared, with which, and their furs, they pro-

ceed to Canton, and return to the United States with cargoes of teas, &c. The value at Canton of the furs, sandal wood, and other articles, carried thither the last season, by American vessels engaged in the trade, was little short of half a million of dollars. When it is considered that a comparatively small capital is originally embarked; that a great part of the value arises from the employment of so much tonnage, and so many men, for the long time necessary to perform a voyage; and that government finally derives a revenue from that portion of the proceeds which is brought home in teas, equal at least to the amount invested at Canton, we believe this trade will be thought too valuable to be quietly relinquished.

The publication, of which the title is perfixed to this article, contains certain documents, communicated by the president of the United States to congress at their last session. The most important of them is the ukase, issued by the emperor of Russia in September 1821, and made known to our government in February of the present year. We shall devote most of this article to some remarks on this Russian edict, and the correspondence in relation to it between Mr Adams, secretary of state, and the chevalier de Poletica, the Russian minister to the United States.

The prohibitions and regulations contained in this edict are very minute and particular, occupying nearly ten pages of a closely printed pamphlet, and divided into sixty-three sections; in the first and second of which, however, will be found the pith and marrow of the subject. These, together with the introduction, we transcribe. The others are of minor importance. They however authorize the forcible seizure, by Russian ships of war, by vessels belonging to the company, or by individuals in their service, of all foreign vessels which may be *suspected* of violating these regulations, and direct that they be sent to the port of St Peter and St Paul, in Kamtchatka, for trial; and if condemned, the crews are to be sent across Siberia, to some port on the Baltic, and permitted to return to their own country, if they can find the means!

'EDICT

'*Of His Imperial Majesty, Autocrat of all the Russias.*

'The Directing Senate maketh known unto all men: Whereas, in an Edict of His Imperial Majesty, issued to the Directing Senate on the 4th day of September, and signed by his Imperial Majesty's own hand, it is thus expressed: "Observing, from re-

ports submitted to us, that the trade of our subjects on the Aleutian Islands and on the northwest coast of America appertaining unto Russia, is subjected, because of secret and illicit traffic, to oppression and impediments; and finding that the principal cause of these difficulties is the want of rules establishing the boundaries for navigation along these coasts, and the order of naval communication, as well in these places as on the whole of the eastern coast of Siberia and the Kurile Islands, we have deemed it necessary to determine these communications by specific regulations, which are hereto attached.

"In forwarding these regulations to the Directing Senate, we command that the same be published for universal information, and that the proper measures be taken to carry them into execution."

Countersigned COUNT D. GURIEF,
Minister of Finances.

"It is therefore decreed by the Directing Senate, that His Imperial Majesty's Edict be published for the information of all men, and that the same be obeyed by all whom it may concern."

'The original is signed by the Directing Senate.

'On the original is written, in the hand writing of His Imperial Majesty, thus:

"Be it accordingly.
ALEXANDER."

'SEC. 1st. The pursuits of commerce, whaling, and fishery, and of all other industry, on all islands, ports, and gulfs, including the whole of the northwest coast of America, beginning from Behring's Straits, to the 51° of northern latitude, also from the Aleutian islands to the eastern coast of Siberia, as well as along the Kurile islands from Behring's Straits to the south cape of the island of Urup, viz: to the 45° 50′ northern latitude, is exclusively granted to Russian subjects.

'SEC. 2d. It is therefore prohibited to all foreign vessels, not only to land on the coasts and islands belonging to Russia, as stated above, *but also to approach them within less than a hundred Italian miles.* The transgressor's vessel is subject to confiscation, along with the whole cargo.'

We doubt if pretensions so extravagant and unfounded—so utterly repugnant to the established laws and usages of nations, have been set up by any government, claiming rank among civilized nations, since the dark ages of ignorance and superstition, when a bull of the holy see was supposed to convey the rights of sovereignty over whole continents, even in anticipation of their discovery. Russia claims the exclusive possession of the whole American continent, north of the 51st degree of latitude! We say the whole continent, for we search in vain

for limits except the latitude of 51° on the south, and 'Behring's Straits' on the north. It is just possible that his 'imperial majesty' may be content, *for the present*, to take the Rocky Mountains for his eastern boundary, though we are not sure but we do him injustice in ascribing to him such narrow views. Even the attempts of Spain, to usurp the exclusive navigation of the South sea in the vicinity of her American possessions, arbitrary as they were, and violating, as they did, the indisputable rights of other nations, must, when examined with reference to the different periods when they were made, yield in absurdity to the claims now before us. We cannot forbear expressing our surprise, that, in this enlightened age, when the general principles of national rights have been clearly defined, and are well understood, a government, possessing the highest influence in the political world, and constantly referred to as the arbiter of national disputes, should prefer claims which can only be supported by the extraordinary notion of considering the Pacific ocean a 'close sea,' where it is, at least, four thousand miles across.

Mr Adams, in answer to a note from M. de Poletica, accompanying a printed copy of the Russian edict, expresses the surprise of the American government at the extraordinary claims it sets forth, and after alluding to the friendly relations which have always existed between the two nations, says, 'it was expected before any act which should define the boundaries between the territories of the United States and Russia on this continent, that the same would have been arranged, by treaty, between the parties.' We think this expectation a very reasonable one, and the different course which Russia has chosen to pursue evinces either ignorance of her own rights, or a disregard to those of others. Mr Adams inquires if M. de Poletica is 'authorized to give explanations of the grounds of right, upon principles generally recognized by the laws and usages of nations, which can warrant the claims and regulations contained in the edict.' M. de Poletica, in reply, declares himself 'happy to fulfil this task.' But as this letter purports to be a complete vindication of the claims of Russia, we prefer giving it entire; and shall follow it with some comments on the 'historical facts' it contains, and the inferences which are drawn from them; and add some facts within our own knowledge, which may have a bearing on the subject.

['TRANSLATION.]

'*The Chevalier de Poletica to the Secretary of State.*

'SIR—I received two days since, the letter which you did me the honor to address to me on the same day, by order of the President of the United States, in answer to my note of the 11th current, by which I discharged the orders of my government, in communicating to you the new regulation adopted by the Russian American Company, and sanctioned by his majesty the emperor, my august sovereign, on the 4th (16th) of September, 1821, relative to foreign commerce in the waters which border upon the establishments of the said company, on the northwest coast of America.

'Readily yielding, sir, to the desire expressed by you in your letter, of knowing the rights and principles upon which are founded the determinate limits of the Russian possessions on the northwest coast of America, from Behring's Strait to the 51° of north latitude, I am happy to fulfil this task, by only calling your attention to the following historical facts, the authenticity of which cannot be contested.

'The first discoveries of the Russians on the northwest continent of America, go back to the time of the Emperor Peter I. They belong to the attempt, made towards the end of the reign of this great monarch, to find a passage from the Icy sea into the Pacific ocean.

'In 1728 the celebrated Captain Behring made his first voyage. The recital of his discoveries attracted the attention of the government, and the Empress Anne entrusted to captain Behring (1741) a new expedition in these same latitudes. She sent with him the academicians, *Gmelin, Delile de la Crayere, Muller, Steller, Fisher, Krasilnicoff, Kræcheninicoff,* and others, and the first chart of these countries which is known, was the result of their labors, published in 1758. Besides the strait, which bears the name of the chief of this expedition, he discovered a great part of the islands which are found between the two continents; cape or mount St Elias, which still bears this name upon all the charts, was so called by Captain Behring, who discovered it on the day of the feast of this saint; and his second, Captain Tchiricoff, pushed his discoveries as far as the 49th degree of north latitude.

'The first private expeditions undertaken upon the northwest coast of America, go back as far as the year 1743.

'In 1763, the Russian establishments had already extended as far as the island of Kodiak, (or Kichtak.) In 1778, Cook found them at Ounalashka, and some Russian inscriptions at Kodiac. Vancouver saw the Russian establishment in the bay of Kinai. In fine, Captains Mirs, Portlock, La Peyrouse, unanimously attest the existence of Russian establishments in these latitudes.

'If the imperial government had, at the time, published the dis-

coveries made by the Russian navigators after Behring and Tchiricoff, (viz. Chlodiloff; Screbreanicoff; Krassilnicoff; Paycoff; Poushcareff; Lazareff; Medwedeff; Solowieff; Lewasheff; Krenitsin; and others,) no one could refuse to Russia the right of first discovery, nor could even any one deny her that of first occupation.

'Moreover, when D. José Martinez was sent, in 1789, by the court of Madrid, to form an establishment in Vancouver's Island, and to remove foreigners from thence under the pretext that all that coast belonged to Spain, he gave not the least disturbance to the Russian colonies and navigators; yet the Spanish government was not ignorant of their existence, for this very Martinez had visited them the year before. The report which captain Malespina made of the results of his voyage, proves, that the Spaniards very well knew of the Russian colonies, and in this very report it is seen that the court of Madrid acknowledged that its possessions upon the coast of the Pacific ocean ought not to extend to the north of Cape Blanc, taken from the point of Trinity, situated under 42° 50′ of north latitude.

'When in 1799, the emperor Paul I. granted to the present American company its first charter, he gave it the exclusive possession of the northwest coast of America which belonged to Russia, from the 55th degree of north latitude to Behring's strait. He permitted them to extend their discoveries to the south, and there to form establishments, provided they did not encroach upon the territory occupied by other powers.

'This act, when made public, excited no claim on the part of other cabinets, not even on that of Madrid, which confirms that it did not extend its pretensions to the 60th degree.

'When the government of the United States treated with Spain for the cession of a part of the northwest coast, it was able to acquire by the treaty of Washington, the right to all that belonged to the Spaniards, north of the 42d degree of latitude; but, this treaty says nothing positive concerning the northern boundary of this cession; because, in fact, Spain well knew that she could not say, that the coast as far as the 60th degree belonged to her.

'From this faithful exposition of known facts, it is easy, sir, as appears to me, to draw the conclusion that the rights of Russia to the extent of the northwest coast, specified in the regulation of the Russian American Company, rest upon the three bases required by the general law of nations and immemorial usage among nations; that is, upon the title of first discovery; upon the title of first occupation; and, in the last place, upon that which results from a peaceable and uncontested possession of more than half a century; an epoch, consequently, several years anterior to that when the United States took their place among independent nations.

'It is moreover evident that if the right of the possession of a certain extent of the northwest coast of America, claimed by the United States, only devolves upon them in virtue of the treaty of Washington, of 22d of February, 1819, and I believe it would be difficult to make good any other title, this treaty could not confer upon the American government any right of claim against the limits assigned to the Russian possessions upon the same coast, because Spain herself had never pretended to similar right.

'The Imperial government, in assigning for limits to the Russian possessions on the northwest coast of America, on the one side Behring's strait, and, on the other, the 51st degree of north latitude, has only made a moderate use of an incontestible right; since the Russian navigators, who were the first to explore that part of the American continent, in 1741, pushed their discovery as far as the 49th degree of north latitude. The 51st degree, therefore, is no more than a mean point between the Russian establishment of New Archangel, situated under the 57th degree, and the American colony at the mouth of the Columbia, which is found under the 46th degree of the same latitude.

'All these considerations united have concurred in inspiring the Imperial government with an entire conviction that, in the last arrangements adopted in Russia, relative to her possessions on the northwest coast, the legitimate right of no foreign power has been infringed. In this conviction, the Emperor, my august sovereign, has judged that his good right, and the obligation imposed by Providence upon him to protect with all his power the interests of his subjects, sufficiently justified the measures last taken by his Imperial Majesty in favor of the Russian American Company, without its being necessary to clothe them with the sanction of treaties.

'I shall be more succinct, sir, in the exposition of the motives which determined the imperial government to prohibit foreign vessels from approaching the northwest coast of America belonging to Russia, within the distance of at least 100 Italian miles. This measure, however severe it may at first view appear, is after all but a measure of prevention. It is exclusively directed against the culpable enterprizes of foreign adventurers, who, not content with exercising upon the coasts above mentioned an illicit trade, very prejudicial to the rights reserved entirely to the Russian American Company, take upon them besides to furnish arms and ammunition to the natives in the Russian possessions in America, exciting them likewise in every manner to resistance and revolt against the authorities there established.

'The American government doubtless recollects, that the irregular conduct of these adventurers, the majority of whom was

composed of American citizens, has been the object of the most pressing remonstrances on the part of Russia to the Federal government from the time that diplomatic missions were organized between the two countries. These remonstrances, repeated at different times, remain constantly without effect, and the inconveniences to which they ought to bring a remedy continue to increase.

'The imperial government respecting the intentions of the American government, has always abstained from attributing the ill success of its remonstrances to any other motives than those which flow, if I may be allowed the expression, from the very nature of the institutions which govern the national affairs of the American federation. But the high opinion which the emperor has always entertained of the rectitude of the American government, cannot exempt him from the care which his sense of justice towards his own subjects imposes upon him. Pacific means not having brought any alleviation to the just grievances of the Russian American Company, against foreign navigators in the waters which environ their establishments on the northwest coast of America, the imperial government saw itself under the necessity of having recourse to the means of coercion, and of measuring the rigor according to the inveterate character of the evil to which it wished to put a stop. Yet it is easy to discover on examining closely the last regulation of the Russian American Company, that no spirit of hostility had any thing to do with its formation. The most minute precautions have been taken in it to prevent abuses of authority on the part of commanders of Russian cruizers appointed for the execution of said regulation. At the same time, it has not been neglected to give all the timely publicity necessary to put those on their guard, against whom the measure is aimed.

'Its action therefore can only reach the foreign vessels, which, in spite of the notification, will expose themselves to seizure, by infringing upon the line marked out in the regulation. The government flatters itself, that these cases will be very rare; if all remain as at present appears, not one.

'I ought, in the last place, to request you to consider, sir, that the Russian possessions in the Pacific ocean, extend on the northwest coast of America, from Behring's Strait to the 51st degree of north latitude, and on the opposite side of Asia, and the Islands adjacent, from the same Strait, to the 45th degree. The extent of sea of which these possessions form the limits, comprehends all the conditions which are ordinarily attached to *shut seas* (Mers fermées) and the Russian government might consequently judge itself authorized to exercise upon this sea the right of sovereignty, and especially that of entirely interdicting the entrance of foreigners. But it preferred only asserting its essential rights, without taking any advantage of localities.

'The Emperor, my august sovereign, sets a very high value upon the maintenance of the relations of amity and good understanding, which have till now subsisted between the two countries. The dispositions of his Imperial Majesty, in this regard, have never failed appearing at all times, when an occasion has presented itself in the political relations of the United States with the European powers, and surely in the midst of a general peace Russia does not think of aiming a blow at the maritime interests of the United States; she who has constantly respected them in those difficult circumstances in which Europe has been seen to be placed in the latter times, and the influence of which the United States have been unable to avert.

I have the honor to be, with high consideration, sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

PIERRE DE POLETICA.

Washington, 28th February, 1822.'

Before proceeding to remark on this letter, we must call the particular attention of our readers to the conformation of the west coast of America, within the disputed limits; by which the confusion, and apparent contradictions in which the subject has been involved, may be avoided. We further desire, that our conceptions of the question really at issue, may be distinctly understood. It is not, we apprehend, whether Russia has any settlements, that give her territorial claims on the continent of America. This we do not deny—but it is, *whether the location of those settlements, and the discoveries of her navigators are such as they are represented to be; whether they entitle her to the exclusive possession of the whole territory north of* 51°, *and to sovereignty over the Pacific ocean, beyond that parallel.* The extremity of the peninsula of *Alaska* is in about the latitude 55° and longitude 162° west from Greenwich. On the western side of the peninsula the land runs nearly north, to the straits of Behring; on the eastern side it tends northward and eastward, to the entrance of *Cook's River*, in latitude 59°, longitude 152°, and *Prince William's Sound*, in latitude 60° 30′, longitude 146°; thence east, southerly to the *Behring's Bay* of Cook and Vancouver; and more southerly, to Cross sound and Norfolk sound, the latter in latitude 57°, longitude 135°. Cape Scott in the latitude of 51°, to which the Russian claim now extends, is in the longitude of 128°; making a difference between that and the points of Alaska of 34 degrees, or more than 1200 miles. The coast between these two points forms an immense bay, which extends north beyond the 61st degree

of latitude, and is nearly twice as broad across its entrance as the Bay of Bengal. The Aleutian islands, lying southward of Alaska, are scattered between the continents of Asia and America, and extend to the latitude 51°. The large island of *Kodiac*, on which are the principal Russian settlements, lies near the eastern side of the peninsula Alaska, between the parallels of 57° and 58°. Having no disposition to question the claims of Russia, where they have a plausible foundation, we shall, in this discussion, fix the boundary at *Behring's Bay*, in latitude 59° 30′, and longitude 140° ; and leaving her in undisputed possession of that bay, and the whole country northwestward of it, shall confine our remarks to that part of the coast lying to the southward and eastward of it ; which we undertake to prove was first seen and explored by the navigators of other nations, and that a commerce was carried on by them with the native inhabitants, long before the Russians had any intercourse with them whatever.

According to M. de Poletica the 'rights of Russia' to this coast rest upon 'three bases,' viz : 'the title of first discovery,' 'the title of first occupation,' and 'upon that which results from a peaceable and uncontested possession of more than half a century.' We shall examine these 'titles,' in the order in which they are placed.

It is not pretended that Behring extended his excursions beyond the bay which bears his name, and his discoveries are therefore irrelevant to the discussion ; but the assertion that 'his second captain, Tchiricoff, (in 1741,) pushed his discoveries to the 49th degree of north latitude,' is deserving particular consideration, because, it will be found that the asserted Russian 'title of first discovery,' rests wholly on the voyage of this navigator. We have not met with any account of this voyage from which the slightest inference can be drawn that Tchiricoff saw the American coast in the parallel of 49° ; but, on the contrary, all the accounts which we have seen concur in fixing the southern limits of his *continental* researches, north of 55°. The earliest account we can find, is in a memoir of Philippe Buache, read to the French academy in 1752, and published at Paris, in 1753. This memoir is accompanied by a chart, prepared by M. De Lisle, formerly first professor of astronomy in the imperial academy of St Petersburg, and brother to Delile de la Croyere, one of the academicians who accompanied Tchiricoff. On this chart is

marked the route of that navigator from Kamtschatka to America, and of his return. It appears from this that they discovered the coast of America on the 15th July 1741, about the latitude of 55° 30′, and sent a boat, with the pilot, Dementiew, and ten men, with orders to land. This boat not returning, after several days a second one was sent, with four men, who shared the fate of the first, and nothing was heard of them till 1822, when they were fortunately discovered by M. de Poletica, in the latitude of 48° and 49°! After waiting in vain for the return of his boats, Tchiricoff left the coast of America, and on his return, discovered land in latitude 51°. This could be no other than the southernmost of the Aleutian islands; and the circumstance of the natives coming off to him in *skin* canoes confirms this supposition, as no canoes of that description have ever been found on the American coast in that parallel. The authenticity of this account of Tchiricoff's voyage can hardly be questioned. It was published a few years only after his return, and it is stated that M. De Lisle had received the manuscripts of his brother, who died at Kamtschatka shortly after the termination of the voyage. Possibly this chart and memoir may not have met the eye of M. de Poletica, or he would not have asserted that 'the first chart of these countries was published in 1758.' Müller, who was in the expedition, on board Behring's ship, gives nearly the same account as the above, of Tchiricoff's voyage, placing his land-fall in latitude of 56°. Cox, Burney, and all writers on this subject, whom we have met with, have adopted these accounts, and we cannot even conjecture on what authority M. de Poletica pushes Tchiricoff's discoveries to 49°.

The formidable host of navigators, cited by M. de Poletica, does not appal us. If our readers will look into 'Cox's account of the Russian discoveries,' and examine the relation there given of most of these voyages, they will find it difficult to believe that any discoveries, resulting from them, remain unpublished, or that they have any bearing on the question before us. There is not the slightest probability that any of those navigators penetrated so far eastward as Behring's Bay. In support of this opinion we have the authority of the learned M. Fleurieu, the most intelligent writer, on this subject, of the last century. In his 'historical introduction' to the voyage of Marchand, published in 1801, speaking of the Russian navigators alluded to by M. de Poletica, he says, 'the principal

object of all these voyages was the examination of that long archipelago, known under the collective name of the *Aleutian* or *Fox* islands, which the Russian charts divide into several archipelagoes, under different names; of all that part of the coast which extends east and west under the parallel of 60°, and comprehends a great number of islands situated to the south of the main land, some of which were visited, and others only perceived by Behring; lastly of the peninsula of *Alaska*, and of the lands situated to the *north* of this peninsula as far as the 70th degree. It is on these Aleutian islands, and on upwards of three hundred leagues of the coast, *which extends beyond the polar circle*, that the indefatigable Russians have formed those numerous settlements,' &c. From all these facts we feel fully warranted in the conclusion, that no Russian navigator, excepting Tchiricoff, had seen the coast, *eastward of Behring's Bay*, previous to the Spanish voyages of Perez, in 1774; Heceta, Ayala, and Quadra, in 1775; that of Cook in 1778; or even so late as 1788, when it was first visited by vessels from the United States. Thus much for the Russian 'title of first discovery:' that of 'first occupation' comes next.

We have no doubt but Russian fur-hunters formed establishments, at an early period, on the Aleutian islands and neighboring coast of the continent; but we are equally certain that it can be clearly demonstrated that no settlement was made eastward of Behring's Bay, till the one at Norfolk Sound in 1799. The statements of Cook, Vancouver, Mears, (Mirs,) Portlock, and La Perouse prove, what we readily admit, that previous to 1786 the Russians had settlements on the island of *Kodiac* and in *Cook's River;* but we shall take leave to use the same authorities to establish the fact that none of these settlements extended so far east as Behring's Bay. Vancouver, when speaking of *Port-Etches in Prince William's Sound* (June, 1794) says, (vol. 3, page 173,) 'from the result of Mr Johnstone's inquiries, it did not appear that the Russians had formed any establishments *eastward of this station*, but that their boats made excursions along the exterior coast as far as Cape Suckling, and their galiots much farther.' Again, page 199, 'we however clearly understood that the Russian government had little to do with these settlements; that they were solely under the direction and support of independent mercantile companies; and that *Port-Etches*, which had been established in course of the preceding summer, *was the most eastern settlement on the American coast.*'

In a subsequent letter to Mr Adams, M. de Poletica says, 'but what will dispel even the shadow of doubt in this regard (title by occupation) is the *authentic fact*, that, in 1789, the Spanish packet St Charles, commanded by captain Haro, found in the latitude FORTY-EIGHT and FORTY-NINE, Russian establishments to the number of *eight*, consisting in the whole of twenty families, and four hundred and sixty individuals. *These were the descendants of the companions of Tchiricoff, who was supposed till then to have perished.*' This, if true, is, we allow, conclusive evidence of the Russian 'title by occupation.' It is certainly the most important fact brought forward by M. de Poletica. In truth it is the only one that, in our opinion, has a direct bearing on the question, and on its correctness we are willing to rest the issue. Nootka Sound lies in latitude 49° 30′, Clayoquot or Port Cox, in 49°, and Classet, at the entrance of the Straits of Juan de Fuca, in 48°. Nootka was first visited by the Spanish navigator, Perez, in 1774, by Cook in 1778; from 1784 to 1789 it was frequented by English, Portuguese, and American vessels; in 1788 captain Mears built there a vessel, and made the settlement which, subsequently, came near causing a rupture between Great Britain and Spain; in 1789 a Spanish settlement was made by Martinez, and continued till 1794. During this period Nootka, Clayoquot, and Classet were the common rendezvous for the ships and fur-traders of all nations; vessels were built by citizens of the United States, both at Nootka and Clayoquot; in 1790 the settlements at Nootka became the subject of investigation in the British parliament, and volumes were written on it. Now we ask M. de Poletica, or any man of common intelligence, if it is within the bounds of probability—if it is even possible, that eight Russian establishments, containing four hundred and sixty-two individuals, should have existed in 1789, in the centre of these operations; on the very spot for which two powerful nations were contending; and no allusion be made to the circumstance during the whole discussion, no mention be made of them by any of the numerous writers on the subject, and no intimation of the fact in the journals of Cook, Mears, Dixon, and Vancouver, who speak of Russian establishments on other parts of the coast, and are altogether silent respecting these, which, had they existed, would have been of more importance than all the other Russian settlements, in that quarter of the globe!

We have recently conversed with a son of captain Kendrick, who was with his father, in the Columbia, in 1787, and remained a considerable time at Nootka, in the Spanish service, and with another individual, of great respectability, now residing near Boston, who, in 1792, built and equipped a small vessel at Nootka for commercial purposes. Both these individuals were personally intimate with captain Haro, at Nootka, but never heard an intimation of his having discovered Russian establishments in that vicinity; yet such a fact must have been highly interesting to the Spaniards, who intended their settlement to be permanent, and to the Americans, who were actively engaged in the fur-trade; and therefore very likely to become a subject of discussion.

In 1799, the writer of this article visited the northwest coast, on commercial pursuits. In the course of that year he entered the several ports situated in the 48th and 49th degrees of latitude; was personally acquainted with the chiefs, and many of the natives; acquired considerable knowledge of their language and customs, but saw no vestige of M. de Poletica's Russian establishments, nor perceived the slightest indication of Russians having ever set foot in the country or visited its shores. These facts might be deemed sufficient, but we shall offer one still more directly to the point. In the summer of 1799, the writer, then off Behring's Bay, in latitude 59° 30′, fell in with M. Baranoff, at that time, and for many years before and afterwards, commander in chief of all the Russian establishments in that part of the world. He visited the American ship, and passed a day on board. Through an Englishman in his service, who acted as interpreter, a full and free communication took place. M. Baranoff stated that he was from Onalaska, which he left in company with a galiot and a large fleet of skin-canoes, from whom he separated, in a fog, a few days before; and that they were all bound for *Norfolk sound*, for the purpose of forming a settlement, or hunting-post. Learning that the writer had been at that place a short time previous, he showed great solicitude to obtain information, particularly respecting the native inhabitants, of whom he appeared to be much in dread, declaring his apprehensions that they would destroy his hunters, and defeat his plans. He further stated, that a hunting party having a short time before extended their excursion to the neighborhood of Norfolk sound, had found the sea otters so abundant as to induce him to un-

dertake what he considered a most perilous enterprise, and *he expressly declared, that this was the first attempt ever made by the Russians to establish a post so far to the southward and eastward.* This, though not a 'historical fact,' is one, for the correctness of which we hold ourselves pledged. It would thus seem that M. Baranoff knew nothing of the extensive Russian establishments in 48° and 49°, and we may, without injustice, regard as wholly gratuitous on the part of M. de Poletica, the discovery of the long lost companions of Tchiricoff. We are tempted moreover to dwell a moment on the unparalleled increase ascribed to this party. Four hundred and sixty descendants from fifteen men in forty-seven years, would afford a duplication of numbers in a little more than nine years, a statement we should not dare to make in the hearing of Mr Godwin. But what has become of these 'eight establishments' at the present time? By the same ratio of increase they would now contain about four thousand souls; why are they left without the pale of imperial protection? If they do not exist, why, when, and to what place were they removed? The plain truth is, that in fixing the situation of the eight establishments, discovered by captain Haro, M. de Poletica has made the mistake (a trifling one it may seem on a Russian map) of *ten degrees* of latitude. They were actually found in latitude *fifty*-eight and *fifty*-nine, instead of 48° and 49°, and distant more than one thousand miles from the situation assigned them by the Russian minister. This fact appears, beyond a doubt, from the account of the voyage of captain Haro, given by M. Fleurieu, in the 'historical introduction' before referred to. It is there stated, on the authority of two original letters, the one from San Blass, dated the 30th October 1788, (a few days after the return of Haro,) the other from the city of Mexico, the 28th of August 1789, that Don Haro found, between the latitudes of *fifty*-eight and *fifty*-nine, eight Russian establishments, each composed of between sixteen and twenty families, forming a total of four hundred and sixty-two individuals. It is added, 'that the strangers had succeeded in habituating to their customs and manners, six hundred of the natives of the country, and received a tribute from them for the empress of Russia.' For this part of the account M. de Poletica has substituted his own speculations concerning the lost companions of Tchiricoff. In a note, M. Fleurieu remarks, that 'in the letter from St Blass it is mentioned that

the settlements are situated between the latitudes of 48° and 49°, but it is either the fault of the copy, or it is by design, that the latitudes have been improperly indicated.' M. de Humboldt, in his 'Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain,' vol. ii. page 320, mentions the voyage of Don Haro, in the St Carlos, and essentially confirms the account already given. As he had access to the manuscript account of the voyage, we presume his authority will not be questioned. Page 339, he says, 'no European nation has yet formed a solid establishment on the immense extent of coast from cape Mendocino, (latitude 42°) to the *fifty-ninth* degree of latitude: *beyond this limit the Russian factories commence*,' &c. We have been thus particular respecting the discoveries made by captain Haro, because M. de Poletica considers them as 'dispelling even the shadow of a doubt' in relation to the Russian 'title by occupation,' even farther south than 51°. As we fully agree with him that they do dispel all doubt on the subject, and as this is probably the only point in which we shall agree, we trust our readers will pardon us for dwelling on this coincidence of opinion.

The minute investigation we have bestowed on the Russian 'title by first occupation,' has sufficiently taxed the patience of our readers, and we spare them an examination of that which 'results from a peaceable possession of more than half a century,' for it is obvious in the present case, that unless the fact of occupation is clearly established, the claim to 'peaceable possession' must fall. We readily concede to Russia, priority of discovery, first occupation, and are by no means disposed to disturb her 'peaceable possession' of the Aleutian islands and adjacent coast, including Cook's River, Prince William's Sound, and Behring's Bay. We are not remarkably disinterested in making this concession, for to all practical purposes, we would as soon contend for one of the floating icebergs that are annually detached from the polar masses. The trade carried on by citizens of the United States with those places was never very valuable, and for many years has been altogether abandoned. In a territorial point of view, it is of little importance whether those distant regions are inhabited by the aboriginal savage or the Siberian convict. As to the fact, however, we give a short quotation from Vancouver, to show that in 1794 the Russians were very far from having 'peaceable possession,' even of Behring's Bay.* In relating

* Vol. iii. page 231, 232.

transactions at that place, when in company with a large hunting party of Russian Indians, he says, 'Portoff embraced this occasion to inform M. Puget, that on the evening of the 28th, while he and his whole party were on one of the small islands in Port Mulgrave,' (situated in Behring's Bay) 'they were surprised by a visit from about fifty of the natives; and notwithstanding the superior numbers of his party (about 900!) he had so little confidence in the courage of the Kodiac and Cook's Inlet Indians, that he was extremely anxious to be quit of such dangerous visitors, and *had determined on returning to Kodiac, as soon as the Chatham should leave the Bay.* The destruction of the settlement at Norfolk sound in 1802, is as little calculated to confirm the fact of peaceable possession at that period. In short, it is perfectly well known to every navigator, Russian as well as others, who has visited that part of the world, that no Russian settlement now exists, or *ever did exist*, between the latitudes of 58° and 42°, except the one so often mentioned at Norfolk sound. On what, then, rests the Russian claim to any part of the country between those parallels? Simply on the facts, that Tchiricoff, in 1741, saw land in 55° 36′, and that M. Baranoff, in 1799, made a settlement at Norfolk sound, which was destroyed in 1802, and re-established in 1804. Such, we conceive, is the plain result of an investigation of the very authorities, which M. de Poletica himself has adduced.

We are not among those who believe that a distant view of a cape or mountain—or dropping the first anchor in a bay or harbor—nay, we carry our incredulity so far as to doubt, if the magical ceremony of landing on a coast, hoisting a piece of bunting, cutting an inscription, or even that last great act of empire, burying a bottle, can invest the nation, whose flag the navigator happens to bear, with the rights of sovereignty over a country, inhabited by a brave and independent people, whose right to the soil which they possess, and the freedom they enjoy, is coeval with time itself. We therefore attach no importance to the circumstance of land being seen by Tchiricoff in 1741; but if M. de Poletica does, we are perfectly willing to try titles with him on the score of discovery. It is well known that Spain, by the third article of the treaty of 1819, ceded to the United States, all her rights to the western coast of America north of 42°. It follows that all the discoveries made by her navigators beyond that limit now belong to the

United States. It is a 'historical fact,' and one too well authenticated to admit of doubt, and it is stated by M. de Humbolt in the work before quoted, page 313, that '*Francisco Gali*, in his voyage from Macao to Acapulco, discovered in *fifteen hundred eighty-two*, the northwest coast of America, under the 57° 30′.'—' On correcting the old observations by the new, in places of which the identity is ascertained, we find that Gali coasted part of the archipelago of the Prince of Wales, or that of King George.' Here we find that the land was discovered and its shores examined one hundred and fifty-nine years before the voyage of Tchiricoff, and from two degrees farther north than the cape seen by that navigator; a fact that puts the Russian claim to discovery out of the question. As little do we believe in the validity of the claims resulting from the occupation of Norfolk sound, in 1799. This sound was first discovered, and examined by the Spanish expedition under Heceta, Ayala, and Quadra, in 1775, and received the name of 'Bay of Guadalupa.' A few years afterwards it was visited for commercial purposes, and abounding in valuable furs, soon became the general resort of all those engaged in that trade. It was frequented by the vessels of Great Britain, France, and the United States, several years before the Russians had extended their excursions so far eastward, and it is therefore clear, that at that time, they had no claim on the ground of occupation. If then prior to 1799, Russia possessed no rights on this part of the coast, but such as were common to, and enjoyed by other nations, we confess our selves unable to perceive why the establishing of a few hunters, and mounting some cannon, in the corner of Sitka Bay, should give her the right of restraining an intercourse, and interdicting a commerce, which had hitherto been free as air; and prohibiting the approach of vessels of other nations, to shores which the navigators of such nations first discovered and explored! The claim of Russia to sovereignty over the Pacific ocean, north of latitude 51°, on the pretence of its being a '*close sea*,' is, if possible, more unwarrantable than her territorial usurpations.

Mr Adams, in noticing it, merely states the fact, that 'the distance from shore to shore on this sea, in latitude 51°, is not less than 90 degrees of longitude, or four thousand miles!' A volume on the subject could not have placed the absurdity of these pretensions more glaringly before us. M. de Poletica in his third letter declines further discussion on this subject,

'as the imperial government,' he says, 'has not thought fit to take advantage of that right.' If interdicting the navigation of this sea, to the distance of one hundred miles from the shore, is not taking advantage of the right to consider it a 'close sea,' we ask M. de Poletica to point out to us the 'laws and usages of nations,' by which such a measure can be justified.

We have thus attempted to lay before our readers, the character of the Russian claims to the northwest coast of America. It is difficult to conjecture what are the ultimate views of the Russian government in relation to this coast. The ostensible object is, evidently, a monoply of the fur trade. It is well known to the Russian fur company, that nearly all the sea otter skins, and most of the other valuable furs, are procured north of the 51st degree, and if 'foreign adventurers' can be prevented from approaching that part of the coast, the company would soon be left in undisturbed possession of the whole trade, for south of 51° it is not of sufficient value to attract a single vessel in a season. This would not only secure to them a monopoly in the purchase, but give them the control of the Chinese market, for the most valuable furs, which would be still more important. But we suspect a deeper design than the monopoly of a few otter skins, for which the interests of the fur company are made a convenient cover. We have the authority of Humboldt for stating that in 1802, the Russian government limited their territorial claims to the north of 55°. They are now extended to 51°, and M. de Poletica informs us, that this is only 'a moderate use of an incontestable right,' intimating that the just claims of Russia extend still further south. If these usurpations are submitted to, is it improbable that a further use may be made of 'incontestable rights?' If the eight establishments existed in 1789, where the Russian minister places them, no one would deny their right of possession, at that time, as far as 48°. The nearest European settlement was then the Spanish one of *St Francisco*, in 38°. The point, equi-distant from these two, is the 43d degree, which, according to the principle asserted by M. de Poletica, would have been the Russian boundary in 1789. With the ingenuity which that gentleman has displayed, it would not be difficult to extend the Russian claims quite to the borders of California, and establish them there as satisfactorily as he has done to the 51st degree. The Russians have

already made a considerable settlement on Spanish territory at Port Bodega, in latitude 40°; and it is *possible*, that guided by the same spirit of philanthropy, which prompted the dismemberment of Poland, the august Emperor may choose to occupy the fertile but defenceless province of California, and annex it to his already extensive dominions. Notwithstanding the friendly relations that exist between the United States and Russia, we should deem it a serious evil to have, on our western frontiers, a formidable population, subjects of an ambitious and despotic government; and all the veneration we feel for the great leader of the 'Holy alliance,' awakens no desire to witness a nearer display of his greatness and power.

Great Britain, we apprehend, will not be more desirous of such neighbours than the United States; and she may think fit to advance claims that will be found to conflict with those of Russia. The subject has recently been noticed in the British Parliament, and appears to have created considerable excitement. In justice to the memory of her celebrated navigators, Cook and Vancouver, we must declare, that the world is more indebted to their indefatigable labors for a correct knowledge of this coast, than to those of all other navigators who have ever visited it. Her subjects were the first Europeans, who engaged in the fur trade, and a free access to the *interdicted shores* is, at the present time, quite as important to them as to those of any other power. Since the commencement of the present century, the British 'Northwest company,' following the steps of the enterprising Mc Kenzie, have extended their trading posts westward of the Rocky mountains, and established them, from the Columbia River, to the latitude of 55°, on the borders of several lakes and rivers, that empty into the Pacific ocean. At first the supplies for these posts were carried from Canada, by way of the lakes, and the *Unjagah*, or 'Great Peace River,' that has its source near the Pacific, and runs eastward, through the Rocky mountains. This mode of transportation was found hazardous and expensive, and arrangements were made, about 1814, by the company, with the proprietors of a settlement made by American citizens, at the mouth of the Columbia, by which the company became possessed of that settlement. Since that time the posts westward of the Rocky mountains receive their supplies through that channel. Hitherto most of these supplies have been shipped from London to Boston, and sent to the mouth

of the Columbia in American vessels. From an intimation, in the fifty second number of the Quarterly Review, we are prepared to learn that the united Northwest and Hudson bay companies have extended their settlements still further, and already fixed themselves on the borders of the Pacific. They will soon discover that the most direct and easy route, for conveying supplies to all their northern establishments, west of the Rocky mountains, and even to some of those on the eastern side of that range, will be by means of the river, called by Mr Harmon the 'Nate-ote-tain,' which empties into the Pacific a little south of 54°; and by 'Nass River,' which disembogues in a large bay, on the eastern side of 'Observatory Inlet,' about the lat. of 55°. The Indians of the coast describe both these rivers as communicating with *eūwon teēdor hūntles*, (great inland waters) and represent the navigation of them as safe and easy for loaded canoes, with the exception of some short portages, at the rapids and falls. They make frequent journies to trade with the Teēdor Hardī, (inland people) who are said to reside in numerous villages on the banks of these rivers and the adjoining lakes. The free navigation of these streams will be highly important to the united fur company; and the British administration of the present day must be actuated by a very different spirit from that which, thirty years ago, prompted the expenditure of millions, in preparing to resent the outrage committed at Nootka, if they do not resist the usurpations of Russia; usurpations which would compel the British company to abandon the settlements already made, and forego the advantages resulting from free access to the shores of the continent, north of 51°.

France has likewise an interest in resisting the pretensions of Russia. She has made several efforts to carry on a trade to this coast since it was visited by her distinguished navigator, the unfortunate La Perouse. The voyage of Marchand, in the Solide, was made between 1790 and 1793; and a French vessel was cut off, by the tribe of Coyer, near the south part of Queen Charlotte's islands, about the same time. In 1819 the attempt was renewed. A vessel from France, in course of that season, collected a cargo of furs on the coast, and carried them to Canton. These, however, are all the attempts of that nation which have come to our knowledge. One section of the Ukase appears to us little short of an actual declaration of hostilities against every nation carrying on a trade to the northwest coast. It is as follows:

'Sec. 26. The commander of a Russian vessel, *suspecting* a foreign one to be liable to confiscation, must inquire and *search* the same, and finding her guilty, take possession of her. Should the foreign vessel resist, he is to employ, first, *persuasion*, then *threats*, and at last *force;* endeavoring, however, at all events, to do this with as much reserve as possible. If the foreign vessel employ force against force, then he shall consider the same as an evident enemy, and force her to surrender according to the naval laws!'

It might have been expected that no attempt would be made to enforce regulations, so deeply affecting the interest and supposed rights of other nations, pending the discussions they had given rise to; but the closing part of the correspondence precludes the hope of even this *appearance* of justice. Mr Adams, in concluding his last letter, says, 'The president is persuaded that the citizens of this union will remain unmolested in the prosecution of their lawful commerce, and that no effect will be given to an interdiction manifestly incompatible with their rights.' To this M. de Poletica answers, 'I cannot dissemble, sir, that this same trade, beyond the 51st degree will meet with difficulties and inconveniences, for which the American owners will only have to accuse their own imprudence,' &c. If we undertstand this threat, it is meant to prepare us for the immediate execution of the Imperial Ukase. We thank M. de Poletica for this candid avowal of the hostile intentions of his government, and, with equal frankness, assure him, that those engaged in the trade, to the N. W. coast, have always considered it a lawful commerce; and having been confirmed in that opinion by the official declaration of the executive of the United States, that 'from the period of the existence of the United States as an independent nation, their vessels have freely navigated those seas, and *the right to navigate them is a part of that independence*,' and that 'the right of the citizens of the United States to hold commerce with the aboriginal natives of the northwest coast of America, without the territorial jurisdiction of other nations, even in arms and ammunitions of war, is as clear and indisputable as that of navigating the seas,' they are not disposed to surrender these rights without a struggle. The American vessels, employed on the N. W. coast, are well armed, and amply furnished with the munitions of war. Separated from the civilized world, and cut off, for a long time, from all communication with it, they have been accus-

tomed to rely on their own resources for protection and defence; and to consider, and *treat* as enemies, all who attempt to interrupt them in the prosecution of their lawful pursuits. To induce them to relinquish this commerce, 'persuasion' will be unavailing, 'threats' will be disregarded, and any attempts at coercion will be promptly resisted, unless made by a force so superior as to render resistance hopeless, in which event they will look with confidence, to their government for redress and support.

We have already devoted to this article more of our pages than so dry a subject may be thought to merit; but we cannot close without noticing the remarks, made by M. de Poletica, upon what he is pleased to call 'the culpable enterprizes of foreign adventurers,' whom he accuses of carrying on an 'illicit trade' of 'furnishing arms and ammunition to the natives in the Russian possessions in America,' and of 'exciting them in every manner to resistance and revolt against the authorities there established.'

In answer to the first charge, we would observe, that the trade carried on by citizens of the United States with the Russian settlements on the northwest coast, has the sanction of their own government, and till now has never been prohibited by that of Russia. It is done openly, and with the consent of the 'established authorities' at the several places, who are themselves, in most instances, parties to all commercial transactions. But for the supplies which this trade has furnished, some of the Russian settlements must have been abandoned; and from Langsdorff's account of the situation of 'New Archangel,' it appears that in 1805 the people would have perished from famine, had they not been relieved by American traders. At this moment American vessels are engaged, by contract with the servants of the Russian fur company, in supplying their settlements with the necessaries and comforts of life. It is a perversion of language to call such a trade 'illicit.'

On no better foundation rests the charge of 'furnishing arms and ammunition to the natives in the *Russian possessions*.' The natives who have been subjected to the Russian power are too wretchedly poor to purchase arms, or indeed any thing else. That supplies of this nature are furnished in large quantities, to the independent aboriginal inhabitants, is certainly true. No arguments are necessary to prove our unquestionable right

to continue such supplies, and Russia might with equal justice complain of our furnishing the Chinese with furs, as 'prejudicial to rights,' which the 'Russian American company' seem disposed to 'reserve entirely,' to themselves.

The *general* charge of 'exciting the natives to *revolt* against the established authorities' may be sufficiently answered by as broad a denial. The only specification we have met with is the following relation, given by the Russian navigator, Lisiansky, of the destruction of the settlement at Norfolk sound, in 1802, by the Sitka Indians.

'With so fair a face of friendship, no enmity could be suspected, and the fort was occasionally left in a sort of unprotected state; the Aleutians and Russians being engaged in hunting the sea-otter, or in the still more necessary business of procuring a supply of provisions for the winter. It was an opportunity of this nature which the Sitcans embraced for the execution of their nefarious plan; and so secret were they in its management, that, while some stole through the woods, others passed in canoes by different creeks to the place of rendezvous; they were about six hundred in number, and all were provided with fire-arms. Though the attack was wholly unexpected, the few Russians in the fort courageously defended it. But vain was defence against such numbers: it was quickly taken by storm. The assault commenced at noon, and in a few hours the place was levelled to the ground. Among the assailants were three seamen belonging to the United States, who, having deserted from their ship, had entered into the service of the Russians, and then took part against them. These double traitors were among the most active in the plot. They contrived combustible wads, which they lighted, and threw upon the buildings where they knew the gunpowder was kept, which took fire and were blown up. Every person who was found in the fort was put to death.'

M. Lisiansky does not favor us with his authority for implicating the Americans in this transaction, of which we have received a very different account from a source which leaves not a doubt, in our minds, of its authenticity; and which we subjoin to shew that 'foreign adventurers' have, contrary to the dictates of sound policy, and their own interest, taken part with the Russians against the aboriginal natives.

The intolerable tyranny, exercised by the Russians, over the Sitka Indians, in seizing their chiefs, and loading them with irons, on the most frivolous pretences; in taking posses-

sion of their hunting-grounds, and attempting, by every means in their power, to subject them to the most abject slavery, roused the indignation of that tribe, and they resolved to destroy their oppressors or perish in the attempt. Having by an appearance of submission lulled the suspicions of the Russians, they determined in the summer of 1802 to make the attack. At that time there resided at the Russian settlement, six American seamen, who had deserted from the ship Jenny, of Boston, and *been secreted by the Russians till after her departure.* These seamen were invited by the Indians to visit the village of Sitka, and, on arriving there, were informed of the meditated attack and their assistance solicited. This was *positively refused.* They were then assured that no injury should be done to them, whatever might be the event, but that they must remain at the village, under guard till the event was known. The Indians, succeeded in surprising and destroying the fort, and under the excitement of the moment, put to death every Russian whom they found. The Aleutian women, and some children, who were living with the Russians, were made prisoners. A few days afterwards, two American vessels and one English, entered Norfolk sound. The Indians immediately brought the six Americans on board in safety, but refused to comply with a demand, made by the commanders of these vessels, for the Aleutian women and other captives, taken in the fort; and coercive measures were finally resorted to, and hostilities commenced, by these 'foreign adventurers,' to obtain the release of Russian subjects! This was accomplished, and upwards of thirty individuals were received on board, and carried in one of the vessels, to the Russian settlement at Kodiac. The writer was at that time, in the vicinity of Norfolk sound and received this account from the Sitka Indians, and from the officers of the American vessels; some of whom are now living in Boston. But had the conduct of the Americans been otherwise, we cannot admit that *any* transactions in Norfolk sound would support the charge of 'exciting revolt' in the '*Russian possessions*;' for the whole of her possessions there are limited to the range of the cannon-shot of her fort. The whole extent of coast, from latitude 58° to the straits of Juan De Fuca, in 48°, is inhabited by numerous powerful and warlike tribes, perfectly free and independent of Russian authority. Possessing in a high degree, the nobler traits of savage character, and devotedly attached to

liberty; they prize personal freedom more highly than life itself.

The courage and constancy of the Sitka Indians, when attacked by the Russians in 1804, is a striking instance of their intrepidity, and deep rooted love of independence; and warrants the conclusion, that to secure the 'peaceable possession' of that country to Russia, something more will be requisite than the '*be it accordingly*' of her Emperor, or the arguments of her envoy. The following is from the account of that transaction, by Lisiansky, who commanded the Neva, a Russian ship of war, engaged in the expedition.

'In the afternoon of the 26th, a canoe, with three young men in it, came alongside the American ship.* Being informed that one of these youths was the son of our greatest enemy, I could not resist the desire I felt to have him in my power; and the moment the canoe left the O'Cain, I despatched a jolly boat in pursuit of it; but the natives rowed so lustily, that they outstripped the boat; and when our party fired upon them, they intrepidly returned the fire, shewing us thereby, with what sort of persons we should have to deal.' Again, 'he (the ambassador) was then sent back with the same answer as before, that we required, as a necessary preliminary to pacification, that the chiefs themselves should come to us. At noon we saw thirty men approaching, all having fire-arms. They stopped when at the distance of musket-shot from the fort, and commenced their parley; which, however, was quickly terminated, *as they would not agree to a proposal made by M. Baranoff, that we should be permitted to keep perpetual possession of the place at present occupied by us, and that two respectable persons should be given as hostages!* On the conclusion of this interview, the savages, who were sitting, rose up, and after singing out three several times *Oo, Oo, Oo!* meaning end, end, end! retired in military order. However, they were given to understand by our interpreters, that we should instantly move our ships close to their fort, (for their settlement was fortified by a wooden fence,) and they would have no one but themselves to reproach for any consequences that might ensue.'

'On the 1st of October we carried this menace into execution, by forming a line with four of our ships before the settlement. I then ordered a white flag to be hoisted on board the Neva, and presently we saw a similar one on the

* The American ship O'Cain, of Boston, was then lying in Norfolk sound.

fort of the enemy. From this circumstance, I was not without hope that something might yet occur to prevent bloodshed; but finding no advances on their part, I ordered the several ships to fire into the fort. A launch and a jolly-boat, armed with a four pounder, under the command of lieutenant Arboosoff, were then sent to destroy the canoes on the beach, some of which were of sufficient burthen to carry sixty men each, and to set fire to a large barn, not far from the shore, which I supposed to contain stores. Lieutenant Arboosoff finding he could do but little execution from the boats, landed, and taking with him the four pounder, advanced towards the fort. M. Baranoff, who was then on board the Nerva, seeing this, ordered some field pieces to be landed, and with about one hundred and fifty men, went himself on shore to aid the lieutenant. The savages kept perfectly quiet till dark, except that now and then a musket was fired off. This stillness was mistaken by M. Baranoff; and encouraged by it, he ordered the fort to be stormed; a proceeding, however, that had nearly proved fatal to the expedition, for as soon as the enemy perceived our people close to their walls, they collected in a body, and fired upon them with an order and execution that surprised us. The Aleutians, who with the aid of some of the company's servants, were drawing the guns along, terrified at so unexpected a reception, took to their heels; while the commanders, left with a mere handful of men belonging to my ship, judged it prudent to retire, and endeavor to save the guns. The natives seeing this, rushed out in pursuit of them, but our sailors behaved so gallantly, that though almost all wounded, they brought off the field-pieces in safety. In this affair, out of my own ship alone, a lieutenant, a master's mate, a surgeon's mate, a quarter master, and ten sailors of the sixteen who accompanied them, were wounded, and two killed; and if I had not covered this unfortunate retreat with my cannon, not a man would probably would have been saved.' The Russians finally prevailed, by the superiority of their artillery, and this was the closing scene.

'When morning came, I observed a great number of crows hovering about the settlement. I sent on shore to ascertain the cause of this, and the messenger returned with news that the natives had quitted the fort during the night, leaving in it alive, only two old women and a little boy. It appears that judging of us by themselves, they imagined that we were capable of the

same perfidiousness and cruelty; and that if they had come out openly in their boats, as had been proposed, we should have fallen on them in revenge for their past behavior. They had therefore preferred running into the woods, leaving many things behind, which from their haste, they had been unable to take away.'

'It was on the 8th that the fate of Sitka fort was decided. After every thing that could be of use was removed out of it, it was burned to the ground. Upon my entering it before it was set on fire, what anguish did I feel, when I saw, like a second massacre of innocents, numbers of young children lying together murdered, lest their cries, if they had been borne away with their cruel parents, should have led to a discovery of the retreat to which they were flying! O man, man! of what cruelties is not thy nature, civilized or uncivilized, capable?'

Whether M. Lisiansky means this exclamation for the invaders or their victims does not appear.

Lisiansky adds 'we have reason to believe, from information we obtained, that the chief cause of their flight was the want of powder and ball; and that if these had not failed them, they would have defended themselves to the last extremity.' Such we know to have been the fact, and but for this, they would with a heroism worthy a better fate, have perished in defending their invaded rights.

The writer was, at that time, near the scene of these transactions, and received from the Indians, daily accounts of passing events. They were in substance much the same as those given by Lisiansky, with this addition, that having so often experienced the perfidy and cruelty of the Russians, they placed no confidence in any promises made by them, and well knew that *slavery* must follow submission. Finding themselves without means of defence, they determined to abandon their country; retreat into the interior, and thus preserve their independence by the sacrifice of their possessions! Those who were too old, or too young to support the fatigues and sufferings of the contemplated journey, were despatched on the spot; 'and,' added the chief, who gave this account, '*their innocent blood be on the heads of those who caused the deed.*' We shall offer no apology for introducing the following anecdote as a further illustration of the character of these people.

In the summer of 1804, several tribes collected at 'Nass,'

where a sort of fair is annually held. At this time an affray took place, between individuals of the *Cockalane* tribe, who reside on the Main, near the entrance of Observatory inlet, and of the *Skettageets* tribe, who inhabit the opposite shores of Queen Charlotte's islands; in which Cockalane, the great chief of his nation, was unfortunately killed. In the course of the following winter, when the inclemency of the season prevented all intercourse between the Indians of the main and those of the islands, the writer visited Skettageets. Inquiry being made by the chiefs respecting the intentions of the Cockalane tribe, they were told, that early in the spring the friends of the deceased chief were determined to attack them with an irresistible force, and destroy the whole Skettageets nation. *Elsworsh*, a distinguished young chief, heard this account with great calmness, and expressed doubts of the ability of their enemies to execute these threats. Being assured that they were highly exasperated, and resolved on vengeance, he replied with a countenance and manner that expressed his feelings more forcibly than language; 'it is well, let them come—let them attack—let them destroy us—it is well—we are but passing clouds,' and added, pointing to the sun, 'where is the man, like yonder sun, who never dies?'*

Let us not be suspected of representing these people in too favorable a light. They share of course the passions and vices that usually prevail in the savage state. Implacable hatred and thirst for revenge, engendered by real or supposed injuries, too often excite them to deeds, at which humanity shudders. We have known in their intercourse with foreigners, instances of unprovoked outrage and violence. But we have more frequently met with ex-parte accounts of their treachery and ferocity, where circumstances have been known to us that gave a very different coloring to their conduct. They are a people more 'sinned against' than 'sinning.' We should rejoice if the dark shades of their character could be dispelled by the mild influence of christianity, without endangering that independence which is the ground work of every virtue they possess; but our knowledge of their habits and feelings give us little hope of its accomplishment; and our fears that any change, encouraging white people to settle among them, would lead to their destruction, leave us no wish that it should be attemped.

*Kēētlānnu Kēēset, tsué cootcanōng, come howēēne cardie.

The march of civilization seems the signal for their disappearance; and there is something mournful in the reflection, that at no distant period this race of men, which physiologists reckon as one of the distinct varieties of mankind, will exist only in the pages of history.

We have already extended this article beyond reasonable bounds, or we should have offered some remarks on the letter of Mr Prevost to the secretary of state, respecting the Columbia river. We do not subscribe to all the opinions of that gentleman, and doubt the accuracy of the information he received in relation to some facts he has stated. But as we cannot go into the subject at large, we shall only notice an unimportant error in relation to the language, which he says 'bears a strong analogy with that of Nootka.' This mistake (if it be one) may be easily accounted for, when it is known that the natives of Columbia river have frequent intercourse with the Indians of Classett, who speak the Nootka language, and that the first 'foreign adventurers,' who visited the river, had previously acquired a knowledge of that language. It was natural that their intercourse should be carried on in a language of which both had some knowledge, and this has been the case, to a certain extent ever since. A comparison of the following numerals, in the Nootka language, and in that spoken at the mouth of the Columbia, will shew an essential difference.

English.	*Nootka.*	*Cheenook.**
One	Sawac	Ect
Two	Athlar	Mōxt
Three	Cutsar	Clūne
Four	Moo	Luct
Five	Suchar	Quānim
Six	Nōōpoo	Tūckum
Seven	Athlarpoo	Sīnamixt
Eight	Athlacquelth	Stōōtkēēn
Nine	Tsawacquelth	Quiēēto
Ten	Hēioo	Taītlelum

* Mouth of the Columbia.

ART. XIX. *Dissertation on Musical Taste, or General Principles of Taste, applied to the Art of Music. By Thomas Hastings.* Albany, Websters & Skinners, 1822. p. 228.

TRUE reformation is rarely the work of a moment. When the tenacious grasp with which mankind cling to long established customs and opinions is once broken, they generally rush to the opposite extreme, and in their eagerness for reform adopt without examination whatever seems to be contrary to their former notions. 'Tear away, brother Martin, never mind, so you do but tear away,' is the maxim on which they often proceed; and the consequence is, that when the excitement is diminished and they begin to review their labor, they find that they tore the old coat in pieces before they had made another—that they have still much to do before they can appear in a decent dress. Something like this has been the case in the change which, within a few years, has taken place in the character of our music.

When the discerning part of the community had at last become sensible of the absolute worthlessness of the music generally heard in our congregations, and awake to the necessity of a reform, it was quite natural that the first determination should be to throw aside the whole mass of insipid compositions, to which they had so long listened, and to substitute the works of foreign masters in their stead. The attempt was a laudable one; at the same time it must be allowed that the knowledge and good judgment of those who were active in the measure, were outstripped by their zeal. The community needed more preparation for so great a change, and to the no small astonishment of the reformers, the anticipated result was not realized. There were two causes of this disappointment. One was a general deficiency in musical science, which prevented any just discrimination in selecting from the works of European composers. The good and the bad were equally liable to be taken, and the quantity of the latter greatly exceeded that of the former; so that in reality the exchange was in many instances very little for the better. But there was another cause far more operative. Bad habits of execution, which in a considerable degree had their origin in the peculiar qualities of the wretched compositions that had been so long in vogue, still remained. The tune was changed, but the man-