

tangling alliances, into which we should never have entered; by receding from rejected concessions, which we ought never to have made.* That is the object and the effect of the joint resolution I introduced.

But the Committee on Foreign Affairs may, perhaps, further object, that such a notice as that resolution proposes is likely to prove offensive, and to involve us in a war. If to declare to Great Britain that she is no longer to remain with us a joint occupant of the valley of the Columbia be cause of war, then war must come. It may come sooner—it may come later; but come it must, at last. Can you arrest emigration to Oregon? How do you propose to set about it? Will you build up, along the summit range of the Rocky mountains, a Chinese wall of demarcation, and say to the tameless spirits of the western wilderness, "Thus far shall ye go, and no farther, and here shall your onward progress be stayed?" Canute had an easier task. When you can whistle back the mountain eagle in his upward flight to the sun; when you can arrest, by a word, the wild horse of the prairie in his mad career; when you can quench, in the bird of passage, that instinct which bids her be up and away to the regions nature designed for her—then, then only, expect to set up mete or bound short of the broad Pacific, a barrier to the restless enterprise of the west.

Oregon is our land of promise. Oregon is our land of destination. "The finger of Nature"—such were once the words of the gentleman from Massachusetts, [Mr. ADAMS,] in regard to this country—"points that out." Two thousand American citizens are already indwellers of her valleys. Five thousand more—ay, it may be twice that number—will have crossed the mountain passes, before another year rolls round. While you are legislating, they are emigrating; and whether you legislate for them or not, they will emigrate still.

What is to be the result of all this? What will England do? If she permit us, as I hope and believe, peacefully to overrun the Columbia valley, north as well as south of the stream, then neither will she find cause of offence in this resolution. But if she resist—and, as a leading London journal (not the ministerial organ, however,) boldly avows she will—if she arm the Indian tribes in her cause,—what then? This resolution may be voted down; the Oregon bill of my friend from Missouri [Mr. HUGHES] may be defeated this session, as a similar bill was, the last; we may depart from these halls without lifting a finger to protect, by military post or otherwise, our settlers on the Columbia; and yet, let the British Government fulfil this threat of arming Indians against us, and then let the tomahawk draw but one drop of American blood; let one single scalp be taken—the forerunner

* Mr. OWEN, speaking in Committee of the Whole on the disadvantages even of the line of 49°, as proposed by the United States and rejected by Great Britain, alluded to the fact, ascertained by the late exploring expedition, that almost all the large masses of good timber in the Territory are found north of 48°, chiefly north of 49°; that a very large district of country around Fort Wallawalla is altogether rolling prairie, destitute of timber, and almost necessarily dependent, in consequence, on the mountain country north of 49°; whence, by means of the upper branches of the Columbia, stretching north as far as 53°, any amount of the best timber can be obtained.

Another great disadvantage of this boundary was also adverted to by Mr. OWEN—the fact, namely, that it shut out the United States from the harbors of Nootka and Nitinat, on Vancouver's island, two of the best on the northwest coast; and also from the mouth of Fraser river, a stream the second in importance in the Territory. From the latitude of 42° along the coast to the straits of Fuca, in latitude 48° 30', there is not, Mr. O. remarked, a single harbor of even moderate value. The mouth of the Columbia is worthless as a roadstead; and Gray's harbor, in 47°, is but little better.