

humble judgment it would be unwise to accept the cession. If Mexico were to be annexed to this Union, it would be unwise to grant her prayer. For, if annexed, the Mexican States and the Canadas would have to come into the Union upon footing of perfect equality with the States which now compose the Union. The British subjects of Canada, the whole population of Mexico—Indians, negroes, Spanish Mexicans—all would be adopted as citizens of this Republic, and, as such, would participate, according to their numbers, in governing this Union, making its laws, electing its Presidents. Will such infusions into our political institutions either purify them, or guaranty their perpetuity? It would have been far better for our ancestors quietly to have borne the British yoke; it would have been better for their children to have been born British subjects, than for us to make such an application of our boasted right of self-government as would subject us to the government of British subjects, Mexican barbarians, of whom it is difficult to determine which of the three races is most degraded—the negroes, the Indians, or the Spanish Mexicans. No, sir, Oregon, upon the 49th parallel of latitude, and the province of Upper California, when it can be fairly acquired, is the utmost limit to which this nation ought to go in the acquisition of territory. I have already endeavored to show that Oregon must be ours in a short time unless that end be defeated by our own folly; and with good management, California may presently be fairly acquired. Within the broad territory which will then be ours a territory destined, within the lifetime of those now born, to contain more than a hundred millions of inhabitants—a territory stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean, and from the latitude of 49 degrees north almost to the equator—surely we have “scope and verge enough” within which to illustrate the capacity of republican government to promote the happiness and elevate and improve the character of man. Upon this broad theatre “let us act well our part,” and we will achieve a nobler destiny for ourselves and our posterity; we will accomplish more by our example for the nations of the earth, than we can possibly achieve and accomplish by wars of aggression for the conquest of territory, or for political propagandism. Much has been said in the debate which inspires a wish to enlarge upon this theme; but I am constrained to be brief. I fear that gentlemen have permitted themselves to become so enamored of the glories of war as to forget the blessings of peace. Whilst I believe that a war with England at the present time would be one of the greatest calamities that could possibly befall this nation, I believe that peace is yearly bringing to it every thing that can make it great and powerful as a nation, and its people prosperous and happy. I believe that peace, which is so rapidly augmenting its population and wealth and power, will presently place this nation in a position of strength so commanding, that no nation upon earth will be so rash as to dispute its rights, and that all the nations of the earth combined will not be able to outrage those rights with impunity. Let not that which is fraught with so many blessings be lightly and unnecessarily imperiled. If it has been already brought into jeopardy by the rashness of the Executive, acting under party obligations imposed by a political convention, let it be made safe by the wisdom and patriotism of Congress; let us not still further imperil it by passing the resolution reported by the Committee on Foreign Affairs without modification. I believe that it ought not to pass in any form at the present time. If it passes this House without modification surely it will be modified or rejected by the Senate. To doubt these conclusions is to doubt the virtue and intelligence of the American People, as that virtue and intelligence are represented in the Congress of the United States.