

gress, and honorable gentlemen may really entertain them. But I apprehend they will find that England has other reasons, and that those which they render to themselves are fallacious.

It has been said, that the President could have withheld this recommendation to Congress, and thus relieved this body from unpleasant embarrassments produced by no agency of theirs. I cannot conceive how that omission could have been properly made. In my estimation he was bound to assume his present position. The decision of the American people, in his elevation to the presidency, left him no alternative. The question of Oregon was one of the leading subjects in the last presidential canvass, by which he was called to his present station.

If the President had not assumed a claim to the whole of Oregon—if he had not declared that our right to it was unquestionable—that it belonged to us, (as I have no doubt he believed to be the fact,) certainly he would have fallen far short of the discharge of his duty. The question had been mooted and canvassed before the American people. It was a thing not done in a corner. The popular voice was conclusive upon this subject. Enlightened statesmen now entertain opinions in unison with the recommendations of the Executive.

Although the State from which I come was not at that time an integral part of the Union, nevertheless, there was no subject of importance in the United States, of political agitation and excitement, which did not command attention, and some degree of feeling, in our country. We were observant of all that passed here. I again repeat, that the Executive was bound to bring this subject before Congress, as he has done. Could he have acted otherwise, and yet taken his measures in accordance with the principles upon which he was elected? Had the President claimed the country only as far as forty-nine, do you not believe that many who now denounce his extended assumption of our claim to the whole territory, would have been found ready to denounce him for compromising the honor and interest of the country, and as guilty of a shameless abandonment of American rights?

Had he renewed the proposition made by Mr. Gallatin, what would have been the consequence? Would it not now be said *here is collision?* The joint navigation of the Columbia river will at once destroy all harmony between the two countries. His object must be to throw in contact men of different political interests—the subjects of governments of opposite character. War, in that case, would have been inevitable; and the policy would, indeed, have been energetically denounced. Circumstances precluded the President from taking such a course. That functionary assumed a proposition that all Oregon belonged to us; and whether it is correct or erroneous I will not now undertake to determine; for it is not, in my apprehension, a question necessarily connected with the investigation of the subject now before the Senate, which, as I understand it, is the propriety or impropriety, the necessity or want of necessity, of giving the proposed notice.

If England designs to negotiate, the notice will not exclude her from that privilege. The way to negotiation is as open to her as it ever was. But what indication has she given that she is ready to negotiate? England has proposed arbitration—she has not talked of negotiation; and are we wait for the nods and becks of England to determine our own

policy or property, or to what point our privileges extend? If we wait for the convenience of England that if, land—if we wait for intimations from her or a United States ministry to regulate our policy, we may wait of the great an indefinite period. I do not conceive it international be the duty of the representatives of the American people, or the head of this government, to wait the intimations of what England may or may not do. We have to inquire of ourselves, is any measure necessary to the preservation of the Union and well-being of this Union? Is it necessary to the furtherance of our interests and the establishment of our government and upbuilding of our nation that a certain measure should be adopted, or a certain policy pursued? If these questions can be answered affirmatively, then we have only to march forward in the highway to the destiny which is before us. We are not to falter in a decisive act because England may frown or smile on any particular line of policy. We are now called on to adopt a certain measure, and to pursue it with resolute and unflinching firmness. We can only judge of the course which England intends to pursue, and the sentiment which her government entertains at this time towards us, and sympathy from the tone of her journals. We may have recourse to her newspapers, but not to opinions of which only a ministry, in order to ascertain with any degree of certainty the views and designs which are entertained by her Majesty's government on this questionable issue. The British ministry have given only evasive intimations in reference to the proposition rejected by their envoy here; and judging from the less obscure and uncertain expressions in the English newspapers, we have little to apprehend from their favorable disposition towards our interests.

Honorable senators have spoken of "complying with the demand." I abhor the term. It sounds like "temporizing." It implies that something unreasonable is demanded by one of the parties, and that the other, through over anxiety, is prepared or required to promise new make a sacrifice of rights. "Temporize" implies insincerity and duplicity are to pass current for professions, when it is nothing more than the concealment of that candor which it would be honorable to express. These terms should be expunged from the political as well as social vocabularies.

Mr. President, I prefer the term "adjustment," to fester in controversy. The term implies everything desirable in the present phase of this question. We know that there is diversity of opinion, and we should all be at rest, and in favor of doing what is right—of arriving at a decision and carrying out the objects, which alone can be done by an adjustment rather than compromise. We need ask nothing but what is right. We should be satisfied that justice is on our side; and when satisfied of that, we should scrupulously contend our rights without reference to consequences. We should say, This is our right; we will maintain it and abide the worst.

Much as I might deprecate war, which is full of desolation and calamity to all orders of society, I am anxious as I would be to eschew it by all means, my power, consistently with honor and integrity, yet we should be willing to encounter it rather than yield an inch in the maintenance of any ascertained right, either inherent or resulting. But let me ask, are we certain that concession even would procure peace with England? What nation is there that has ever grown or prospered, and become great without encountering war? It would, indeed, be a man. I