

world? England sees this, and, awakening to the truth at the time when her own domination seemed to wane, she seizes upon ocean steam, and quickens individual enterprise by national patronage till she can reassert her supremacy and reconstitute herself as the law-giver of trade; and the honorable gentleman appeals to the Democracy of the country to allow Great Britain to reassume her dominant position. Nay, sir, he turned to the Whigs with an imploring, half-hoping appeal. I, sir, turn to no party, no section; I lay the case before this committee as before American Representatives, representing Americans, and I shall prosecute my argument upon the broad ground of national good; and if any member of this committee points me to a plank in any platform whatsoever, I point him, sir, to the ark of our national covenant, and tell him to leave those perishable materials, and their petty, temporary offices, and to stand by the country, its Constitution, and its means of true independence.

Reference is made to the terms offered by other companies to carry the mails between New York and other ports of this country. Of that I have very little to say. If the United States has made a contract with steamboat proprietors to carry the mail, where there exists only individual competition, as with the California lines, that contract must be fulfilled in letter and in spirit; not one jot or tittle must fail on the part of the Government; the faith and honor of a republic must be kept as sacred and as immaculate as those of a monarch. And we must even make some allowances for short-comings in the contractors. Though in all their home contracts, let it be remembered, Mr. Chairman, the Government patronage is interposed between rival American concerns; or if, when first exercised, only one claimant is presented, it is certain that now