

concerning this measure, upon good faith, and the Baltimore convention, and Southern honor!! Sir, I am precisely where I have ever been on this question. I opposed it, at the last Congress. I shall oppose it now, unless good reasons can be given to induce me to change my course. The change of others, operating perhaps to increase the fury of their zeal, can hardly be expected to carry conviction to any mind intent only on truth or the true interests of the country. When the bill of the last year, finally passed, many with myself voted for it with great reluctance, although we were told, that if the state of the negotiations then pending did not justify it, the notice would be easily stricken out in the Senate. The Senate justified our expectations on this point, although not in the precise mode we had expected; and the notice was not given.

I come, sir, to this question, again presented to the House—shall the notice be given for the termination of the joint occupancy with Great Britain of the Oregon territory? There is no other question in fact; for all the other measures recommended by the President in his message, with respect to the territory, will pass with scarcely a minority.

And the first position, I will take in the debate is this—those who are for changing the existing state of things—those who are for giving the notice and abrogating the convention of 1827, are bound to show, the propriety and policy of the measure. For twenty years, the convention has continued under various administrations. If the policy of the past is to be changed, let the reasons be assigned. Declamation about the valor of the West, and the rapacity of Great Britain, however interesting, will not be sufficient to decide the question. In order that we may understand the effect of your policy, we ask, what is your object in giving the notice? Gentlemen all around me, give the same answer the President in his message shadows forth. He says, that “before we can take exclusive jurisdiction of Oregon, the notice must be given; and he recommends accordingly, that it shall be given. Well, we give the notice, in order that we may proceed at the end of the year, to take “exclusive jurisdiction” of Oregon. This is the object of the resolution before the House. If we are told now, that we must go on to this measure, to accomplish this object—how much stronger will be the argument to pride and consistency, to press it to its conclusion when once begun. Now, I ask, gentlemen, how can we take exclusive jurisdiction of Oregon without war? Must we not, to accomplish this object, at the end of twelve months, pull down the cross of St. George from over some thirty forts, and place the stripes and stars in its stead and either drive every Briton out of the territory, or compel him to swear allegiance to our Government? Is this what gentlemen

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