

principles of charity and good neighborhood. I may treat a neighbor kindly and courteously, without being called upon to give him up half my grazing farm, merely because he happens to have taken a fancy to it. I know we are told, that, if a man smite us on the one cheek, we should turn the other; and if he take our coat, we are to give him our cloak also. Interpreted in its spirit, (not in its letter,) this is an admirable injunction. Kindness wins its way, where harsh violence fails; and we can best overcome evil by doing good. Yet, assuredly, we should have a strange time of it, in this world, if, in literal obedience to the precept, we were to resent no injury, and resist no encroachment. The spirit of concession and compromise, especially towards the powerful and the imperious, may be carried too far. It is out of place when it meets no corresponding spirit, and provokes only arrogant pretension in return.

Such was the return which Henry Clay's proposal met from Great Britain. He offered her territory enough, out of our possessions, to cut up into half a dozen good-sized States; and she, presuming, it would seem, on our easy good nature, declared we must give her sufficient for two or three more, before she closed the bargain. Her plenipotentiaries repeated the offer they had previously made, that the Columbia should be the boundary; adding, however, that, as they must confess there is not a single good harbor from latitude forty-two to the mouth of the Columbia, they would cede to the United States the harbor of Port Discovery, in Fuca's inlet, together with a small rocky isthmus, lying southeast from Cape Flatery. I know not whether the name of the cape suggested the selection of this particular spot; but Captain Wilkes (commander of the late exploring expedition) informs me the whole tract is of very trifling value. It excludes Admiralty inlet and Puget sound, one of the best harbors in the world, and not unlikely, some day, to be the principal port of entry for the Columbia valley.

The offer of Great Britain was, of course, refused; and so terminated the second attempt at negotiation. Do you find in its details, or in its result, much encouragement to engage in a third?

This negotiating about what already belongs to us, is not only an unprofitable but a dangerous affair. We offer to concede and to compromise; we forbear to claim our just due: and straightway our concessions and forbearance are set up as foundation for a title, which has no other ground to rest upon. I know, that, in strictness of law, a valid title is not prejudiced by an offer to compromise, made for the sake of peace. I am aware, that the permission granted by treaty to Great Britain, jointly with us, to occupy this territory, cannot ripen into a title. Yet, in point of fact, a concession ever weakens a claim. It has already done so, in this very case. Mark, sir, I pray you, the admission made by Albert Gallatin, in his official conference with the British plenipotentiaries. I find it in his reply to Mr. Clay, as follows:

"Our never having refused to agree to a line of demarcation with Great Britain was a sufficient proof that we admitted that she also had claims which deserved, and to which we paid, due consideration. It was on that account that the United States had reduced the extent of their own to the boundary-line they had offered, and had added to it the proposal of allowing to British subjects the free navigation of the Columbia."

Is that plain, sir? That we agreed to negotiate, says Mr. Gallatin to the British minister, proves, that we admit you have some title; and therefore, for that reason, because we have been weak enough to negotiate with