

SPEECH.

Mr. KING rose and addressed the committee during the hour as follows :

Mr. CHAIRMAN : In view of the correspondence which has recently passed between the Secretary of State and the British Minister, I shall not offer the amendment, (imbodying a proposition for arbitration,) as I intended, to the resolutions now under consideration. The proposition to settle by arbitration the rights of the United States and Great Britain to the territory of Oregon, and establish an equitable line of partition, having been made in all its forms by her Britannic Majesty's Minister, and been peremptorily, and, as I think, cavalierly, rejected by the President, that mode of adjusting this great controverted question seems to be at an end. Arbitration is one of the most ancient modes known to civilized nations of settling difficult and embarrassing disputes. It is sanctioned, in all its forms, by the law of nations, as founded on the laws of Nature. It has been resorted to in all times by those who wished to mete out that justice to others which they desired should be meted out to themselves. The President of the United States has declared, or permitted his Secretary of State to declare, that the territorial rights of the United States cannot be submitted to arbitration. Who has ever desired the President to submit to arbitration the acknowledged, clearly undisputed, territorial rights of the United States? It is, sir, precisely because our rights in that territory are not clearly defined with respect to limits, and that the title to a very considerable portion of it has been claimed by Great Britain for more than half a century, as against Spain, from whom we profess to derive our own title in no very inconsiderable degree, and that this Government has acknowledged, for the space of seven-and-twenty years, that Great Britain has rights in Oregon, that I supposed that this was a question, of all others which has ever presented itself for adjustment between this Government and that, which, in its complicated character and momentous consequences, could be most properly and equitably adjusted by arbitration, and which, from its very nature, pointed to that as the most honorable and suitable mode of settlement. The President, however, seems to think differently. By assuming the broad ground that our title to the entire territory is "clear and unquestionable," and that our