

States on the rights of all extinguished, and that of the granted them have acquired granted all the and confirmed In 1714, she and we now d her claims e right to be rights. Add d settlement, and inevitable the American United States o of Nootka, t point. Sir, Oregon to be bleable a her-

in to be brief- stipulations d, secondly, the passage of stipulations, now. At the er important unsettled, was ly after that ere renewed, hout arriving e 20th of Oc- the joint use en the United difficulty and objects of the country, until by their re- vention the

that may be west coast of Mountains, , and creeks, in the same, years from present con- subjects of rstood that ried to the r of the two to any part ken to affect tate to any bject of the ct, being to mong them-

ed in force ation; when, her conven- tiators of ticle of th: of the con- itely. The ie contract-

ing parties can, at any time after the 20th of October, 1828, by giving the other party twelve months notice, annul and abrogate that convention.

The third article provides that nothing contained in this convention shall be so construed as in any manner to affect the claims that either party may have to any territory west of the Rocky Mountains. This convention settled no territorial rights of sovereignty or soil, but was a mere temporary expedient; leaving by its own terms the question of territorial limits and title in abeyance. Abrogate this convention, and in what situation do you place the rights of the United States in Oregon? Sir, we will then be restored to the enjoyment of our rights as they were on the 6th day of October, 1818, and on that day we had not only the right of property and the right of possession, but the actual possession. On the 14th day of February, 1818, it was admitted by Lord Castlereagh that we had a right to be reinstated in the possession of Astoria, and to be the party in possession while treating of the title, and for which purpose his written order was issued; which was duly executed by delivering to us the possession of Astoria and the Columbia on the 6th of October following. But unfortunately for American interest in Oregon, on the 20th of the same month this convention of joint use was made at London, without knowledge that Astoria had been surrendered, and by which Great Britain was allowed the joint use of all the country claimed by us west of the Rocky Mountains, together with the harbors, bays, creeks, and navigable rivers thereof. Had Great Britain any rivers, harbors, bays, creeks, or territory, there, for us to possess in common with her? No, sir. There was but one great river there, which drains all Oregon, and that is the Columbia. Great Britain admitted our right to the possession of that stream, and by her written order we obtained it fourteen days before this convention was signed. Great Britain had no harbors, bays, or creeks, in Oregon for us to enjoy in common with her. The convention, in its inception, was altogether one-sided. We gave all, and got nothing. Sir, I want this convention abrogated. I desire to be freed from its trammels, and that our country be restored to the rights she possessed before its adoption. What has been the practical effect of this convention? Why, sir, it has brought us nothing but the bitter fruits of disappointment. It drove our citizens from Oregon, and converted American soil into a British province. It gave to the Hudson's Bay Company the exclusive possession of Oregon, and the undisturbed enjoyment of its trade and commerce for a quarter of a century. It deprived us of the benefits of the restoration of Astoria under the treaty of Ghent. It rendered still more complicated our difficulties with England: it added new coloring to her pretensions, by lapse of time, and she now sets up against us that by it we admitted she had rights in that country. Sir, it has been the source of unmitigated evil to our interests in Oregon, and for a time destroyed all we had there, except our right to the country. These, sir, are the fruits of this convention and "masterly inactivity" for a quarter of a century.

Mr. Chairman, we have tried *masterly inactivity* long enough. We want no more of it. We now want a little *masterly activity*. Up to the year

1818, the greater part of the trade of that country was in the hands of American citizens; but the unprotected citizen, under the operations of this joint-use convention and the withering influence of *masterly inactivity*, was unable to withstand the encroachments of the Hudson's Bay Company, backed up and supported by the masterly activity of the British Government; and thus the exclusive possession and trade of the country fell into the hands of that company. Since 1837, our Government has turned its attention to Oregon. Our western pioneers, encouraged by the action of Government, commenced as early as 1839 to return to Oregon. As the measures of the Government progressed, the tide of emigration increased, until we now have in Oregon some seven thousand citizens, who have formed flourishing settlements at Willamette and Wallawalla, and claim our protection. We can grant them no adequate, permanent, or exclusive rights or homes, until this convention is abrogated. But, say gentlemen, if you give this notice, you will produce a war. That can afford no just cause of a war. It is a treaty stipulation, and we have a right to exercise it at all times, and so can Great Britain. But, say they, what will you do then? Why, sir, we will extend our laws and jurisdiction over our citizens in Oregon, and throw around them the shield and protection of the Government. Can Great Britain complain at this? Certainly not. What has she done for her Hudson's Bay Company? In 1669, King Charles II, of England, granted a charter to this company to trade on Hudson's Bay. This company increased in power and importance, and stretched itself across the northern region of this Continent. In 1819, by the influence of the British Parliament, the Northwest Company was united with, and now forms a part of, the Hudson's Bay Company. On the 21st day of December, 1821, by an act of Parliament, Great Britain granted to this Hudson's Bay Company the exclusive privilege of the trade and commerce of Oregon for twenty years, down even to the Mexican line, excepting from that grant only the right of American citizens to trade in common with that company, under the convention; and by the same act she extended her laws and jurisdiction over Oregon, established her judicial tribunals there with civil and criminal jurisdiction. In 1833, that privilege was continued for twenty-one years more. Yes, sir; British laws have been in full force in Oregon, ever since 1821, and are yet in full force there. True, they do not attempt to enforce their criminal laws against our citizens; but the Hudson Bay Company found other means just as effectual to drive our citizens out of the country. Sir, our citizens have now returned to Oregon, they demand our protection: and will we give it? Yes, sir, we will; but we will go no further with our law, whilst this convention exists, than Britain has gone. But, sir, two separate and independent sovereignties cannot long co-exist in peace in the same territory. Again, we are asked, will you establish your forts? I answer, yes. We will establish a cordon of block-houses and stockade forts, from the upper Missouri to the Rocky Mountains, for the protection of emigrants, granting prospective pre-emptions of lands to settle, at each fort, that provisions may be supplied;