

living witness of the fact. Modern Italy still groans under the curse inflicted upon her centuries ago by a feeble empire, whose tyranny she might have resisted, but did not. To this hour the ignoble descendants of the most heroic race the ancient world ever saw, exhibit the degrading effects of cringing submission. Alas! alas! for the endless train of woe which awaits the nation won from the assertion of her rights by the allurements of luxury and peace.

Upon the other hand, consecrated Marathon, through the lapse of twenty-five centuries, still bears fresh witness to the glory of the heroic Greeks, who disdained a purchased peace. Bunker Hill, Trenton, and Yorktown, are monuments on the page of history, and on our own sacred soil of the same noble resolution. And this whole land, the youngest and fairest daughter of earth, the favored of God, is the enduring and eternal monument of those who preferred resistance to submission, and all the perils of a most unequal and deadly strife, to the debasing pleasures of a purchased, and therefore an ignominious peace.

But you must let us alone with our traffic! Stir not, or our commerce is ruined! You had better surrender Oregon than disturb our traffic!

Such is this day the language of the descendants of those who made that glorious choice. Let us traffic! Traffic on, I say, but do not barter away your country's territory, and her last, her priceless jewel—her honor. Do not traffic, as did the base Judean, who, for thirty pieces, sold "a pearl richer than all his tribe." Traffic on; but, for the love of Heaven, do not traffic in the allegiance of freemen and the freedom of your fellow-citizens.

It was the splendid language of a famous Englishman—"I regard the legal liberty of the meanest man in Britain as much as my own, and I would defend it with the same zeal."

This noble sentiment should of itself preserve the writings of its author to all posterity. But if it be good in an Englishman, how much dearer should its application be to every American. Yet what American can utter it who would be willing to transfer his fellow-citizens to the bondage of a monarch's rule? I cherish this lofty sentiment of the patriotic Englishman, and I cherish it the more as I contemplate its comprehensiveness. Is it regard for the legal liberty of the American citizen to transfer him and his to the dominion and control of the English monarchy? Where is your warrant for ceding away five degrees and a half of Oregon? Where is your warrant for withdrawing the axis of your constitution and laws from any, even the meanest of your citizens, who may have fixed his habitation on the most remote and sterile point in all your dominions? Is the senator from S. Carolina prepared and willing to transfer any, even though it be the poor pioneer, whose sinewy form first parts the tangled forest to let in upon the eternal solitudes the light of day, from whose rude hut the first smoke of the pale face curls in the wilderness? Shall freedom's sabbath be no more for him? Far, far away, and lonely as he is, he has his domestic altar, and

before it God and freedom are worshipped together. He has his household gods—the names his mother taught him, perhaps in South Carolina, perhaps in Massachusetts, when he, a fair-haired boy, played by her side. He has taught in turn, and he hears them daily from his piping childhood, and first of these is Washington. Where is the steel-clad hand, where the iron heart, that would break down this altar, desecrate this worship, and change upon his children's lips the name of Washington for England's Queen? Rather, were that hut mine, should its fire go out forever—rather, far rather, should the serpent wind its devious way among the lifeless bodies of the best loved of my heart, to coil and hiss unharmed upon the hearthstone.

But I have no fears for Oregon, none, if the voice of the American people can be heard. I would be willing this hour to lay aside all further question here, and let the matter go again to them. I say again, for they have already made one decision in favor of the whole territory. The appeal was made by the Baltimore convention to the nation for the whole of Oregon, which was answered by the election of James K. Polk and George M. Dallas. Submit to the people again the question of "Oregon or no Oregon?" "49° or 54° 40'?" If three-fifths do not respond "54° 40'," "the whole of Oregon," I never would utter the word again. My fear is not of the people. My fear is lest this question should be strangled here. When the doors are closed, and there is no eye to see what we do, I fear it may meet the fate "of Richard's nephews in the tower." Everywhere the same mighty considerations must prevail, when the question is known and understood. In the West we utterly forbid the unholy sacrifice—no compromise by the surrender of one single foot.

But it is not the West alone that forbids it. History, speaking from the sepulchre of the sainted dead, forbids it. The shades of Washington, of Adams, of Henry, of the whole host of revolutionary sires, forbid it. A still small voice from Lexington and Concord, forbids it. The holy blood, which ran in torrents on the parched fields of Monmouth, and Brandywine, and Camden, forbids it. All the past—the spectre form of the past—with mournful look, forbids it. The present forbids it. Seven-tenths of the American people forbid it. The future, with one long continued, stern, unbroken front, forbids it. By all the past glory of our country, and in the name of posterity, of the unborn millions whose fortune it shall be to direct free and proud America on her high destiny, I protest against the dismemberment of her territory, the abandonment of her interests, and the sacrifice of her honor, before any and every altar of earth, but especially, and above all others, before the altar of English ambition.

I have but uttered the rights of my country, and by their side I plant myself, ready to abide the issue—come peace, come war.

For the singleness and sincerity of my motives I appeal to Heaven. By them I am willing to be judged now and hereafter, so help me God, when I prostrate at thy feet, I falter forth my last brief prayer for mercy on an erring life.