

to the territory; but I, for one, am not to be deterred by any such considerations. I do not know but we may have to fight for our rights; but no dread of such a contest shall ever operate to deter me from a bold assertion of our title. I am in favor of the passage of a bill at this session, with a preamble, declaring the title to be in the United States. That title will be defended and maintained. I am ready to give pre-emption rights of land to settlers in Oregon. Do this, and hardy and enterprising settlers will speedily emigrate to the territory, and will prove themselves our best negotiators. I am against negotiation *in toto*; that is a field in which Great Britain has always beaten us, and always will.

I will also give the committee an extract from the speech on the same bill of the present distinguished Secretary of the Treasury, (Mr. Walker.) He said:

"The question now was, really, whether we are to assert our rights in relation to this territory, or to abandon them; whether we will maintain our title, or, by our own neglect, suffer it to be placed in doubt. Now, he was fully prepared to say that he was not disposed to abandon one inch of the territory claimed by this country on the northwest coast, from the 42d to the 54th degree of northern latitude. To the whole of this territory he considered the title of the United States indefensible, and we should not abandon our claim to one inch of it. He was not prepared to abandon our title to an inch of the territory, on the ground that our assertion of it would lead to war, or on any other ground, because he considered that title indisputable and indefensible. He believed it now to be the duty of Congress to assert our title; to declare to the world that we will maintain our rights, and will not abandon them. If Great Britain is to take offence at our declaration that we will maintain our rightful claim, her doing so will be no argument to him that we ought to yield."

Mr. Chalmers said: "I am no prophet, nor the son of a prophet, (I have, however, heard that one of the family name has claimed to be one;) I, however, venture to predict that, if we ever get into a conflict with Great Britain, we will never make peace so long as that Government continues to possess one foot of territory on this continent."

For the benefit of my whig friends, and to show that the Oregon question is no party question, I will read short extracts from the speeches of certain distinguished whig Senators during the pendency of Dr. Linn's bill.

Mr. Crittenden was opposed to the "preamble."

"Believing, as he did, that our title is complete and unblemished, he would not sully it by any such proceeding."

Mr. Archer, of Virginia, said:

"He hoped the Senator from Missouri understood that he was not either opposed to the bill, or to the maintenance of our rights whenever there would be occasion to assert them. He only objected to the expediency and necessity of the preamble to the bill."

Mr. Phelps, of Vermont, said:

"As a member of the select committee, he should say that he did not consider the preamble

to the bill, when pressed by the chairman, very important; but he was willing to retain it, on the ground that it was necessary to satisfy the public mind. But now that the subject had been debated, and a question put on striking out the preamble, he thought it better that it should be retained, than that any doubt should be created by striking it out."

All these distinguished Senators united in admitting that our title was clear and indisputable; they were, however, opposed to the preamble of Dr. Linn's bill, chiefly because they feared that its insertion might, in some degree, prejudice our title by seeming to express a doubt on the subject. Whenever our title comes to be fully examined, all doubt on the subject must come to an end. Senator Linn's bill passed the Senate by a very large majority. This fact, and the arguments urged in its favor, are deserving of some consideration. I will refer to the eminent Senator from South Carolina, [Mr. Calhoun,] who made an eloquent speech in opposition to the bill, because he deemed it impolitic to urge our claims *then*. Mr. Calhoun said that our title was so good that it stood in no need of a *hasty* assertion of it. He concluded by saying that, if the bill were to pass, notice to Great Britain ought *first* to be given. While I do not by any means approve all the course of that distinguished Senator on this question, I trust that he will yet be found coming to the rescue, whatever may be the final determination of Congress.

I might here indulge in some comments on the course pursued by certain gentlemen of the South in this debate; but it is not my intention to charge members from the *South* or *North*, who see fit to oppose this notice, with a want of patriotism or devotion to what *they* deem the best interest of the country. We have had too many proofs, assuming the substantive forms of noble and generous deeds, of that devotion to the interests of the whole Union, to allow us to doubt their patriotism. And whatever course these gentlemen may take *here*, I have full confidence that, if war shall come, they will not stop *then* to inquire the cause, but will be found in the front rank, defending the rights and the honor of our common country. I have more charity for the honesty of those who differ from me in opinion than some gentlemen seem to possess; I believe men may honestly differ on great questions. But members from the West have been charged with the design of madly driving the country into a war with Great Britain by their "western furor, braggadocio," &c., in pressing the question of notice. Is it to be characterized as vain boasting and braggadocio to assert here that we are able, ready, and willing to defend our rights, both in peace and in war? When we say that we believe and trust in the arguments advanced by our negotiators in relation to our title to the whole of Oregon, and declare our determination to aid in carrying into effect the recommendations of the President in his Annual Message, are we to be told that it is "demagoguism?" I wish to avoid war, if we can do so without compromising our rights or our honor; but sooner than wound either, I say give no war, with all its horrors. If we shrink from the maintenance of our rights, from an ignoble fear of war, we will show ourselves unworthy descend